

# TODAY'S CATHOLIC



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Thanksgiving



## 'We're All on a Journey Together' Bishop Rhoades on the Synod and the Mission of the Church

BY SCOTT WARDEN

Two years ago, on October 17, 2021, Bishop Rhoades celebrated a special Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception to mark the opening of the diocesan phase of the Synod of Bishops. The Gospel reading during the Mass centered on Christ's challenge to the apostles to be servant-leaders.

"The Church," Bishop Rhoades said, is "a hierarchical communion. The hierarchy's authority, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the authority of service. Exercising authority in this Christ-like manner, it seems to me, includes us bishops listening to you, the People of God, as we lead and serve you."

Little did Bishop Rhoades know then what that service would entail for him.

This past July, it was announced that Bishop Rhoades was named one of five bishop-delegates appointed to the synod by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. In late September,



Provided by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

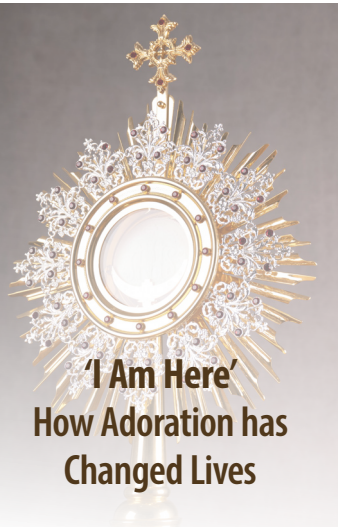
Bishop Rhoades works during the first session of the general assembly of the Synod of Bishops at Paul VI Hall at the Vatican.

Bishop Rhoades flew to Rome, where he participated in a three-day pre-synodal retreat before the general assembly officially opened on Wednesday, October 4. For nearly four weeks, Bishop Rhoades and his fellow delegates from across the world listened to one another about the challenges and hopes of the Church.

In a wide-ranging interview with Today's Catholic, Bishop Rhoades addressed his work at the synod, why Pope Francis sees synodality as vital to the mission of the Church, key topics discussed in Rome, skeptics of the synod, and what he hopes will be its fruits in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

**Today's Catholic: For those who might not know, can you explain what the Synod of Bishops is and its role in the universal Church?**

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## TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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**PUBLISHER:** Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

**PUBLICATION DIRECTOR:** Nicole Hahn

**Editorial Department**

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:** Scott Warden

**PAGE DESIGNER:** Francie Hogan

**VIDEO/SOCIAL MEDIA:** Joshua Schipper

**Business Department**

**BOOKKEEPING/CIRCULATION:**

circulation@diocesefwsb.org

**ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE:**

Erika Barron: ebarron@diocesefwsb.org

**Website:** [todayscatholic.org](http://todayscatholic.org)

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**Today's Catholic may be reached at:**

Today's Catholic,  
P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN  
46856-1169; or email:

[editor@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:editor@diocesefwsb.org)



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**MISSION, from page 1**

**Bishop Rhoades:** Pope St. Paul VI established the Synod of Bishops at the end of the Second Vatican Council, and this was the 16th ordinary general assembly of the Synod of Bishops. The vision Pope Paul VI had was that the synod would be a representative body of bishops that the pope can consult, that would be able to give him advice, their insights. It's really a consultative body, it's not a deliberative body. And certainly, it was used by Pope Paul VI himself, as he held the first synods, and St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI both had many synods. At the end of each synod, which is usually a one-month meeting in Rome, the pope would take all of the recommendations and write an apostolic exhortation.

Now, this current synod, on the topic of synodality, has some changes that have been instituted by Pope Francis. There's much more involvement of consultation of the whole People of God throughout the world. This synod really began a couple of years ago with local churches engaging in small-group discussions and listening sessions on the mission of the Church, as we did here in our own diocese, and giving our input to the [U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops]. A national synthesis was then drawn up that was included in the continental assembly, of which there were seven. After the continental assemblies and their reports, a working document was made for the actual gathering of the assembly in Rome, which is what just took place. The instrumentum laboris, the working document, is what formed the basis for our discussions and various questions that we discussed and reflected upon. So, it is quite a process.

I would say one of the new things instituted by Pope Francis is that about one-fourth of the delegates were non-bishops. That was an innovation. Non-bishops before could be there as observers, could give input, but they would not have a vote. So, we had, at this assembly, priests, sisters, and I think there was a deacon, and, of course, most of the non-bishops were laity, and they were allowed to vote. You can go back to Lumen Gentium, Chapter 2, which is entitled "The People of God." The Church doctrine behind it is that we're all on a journey together as God's people, and, therefore, it's very important that all the People of God have a voice. And so, Pope Francis has taken that to a new level because of the worldwide consultation that took place. And the whole method, so to speak, is to discern God's will, to discern the Holy Spirit. A lot of it



Photo provided by Bishop Rhoades

**Fellow bishops join Bishop Rhoades for a liturgy inside of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome during the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican.**

is listening, listening to people. But remember, it's not a deliberative body. So, the magisterium, the pope in particular, in this case, but also the College of Bishops, are the ones who ultimately make decisions. It's not a parliamentary thing; it's not like the U.S. Congress. This is a spiritual discernment that is supposed to take place, maintaining that truth of our faith – that Christ entrusted to Peter and the apostles the task of doing the ultimate discernment.

**Today's Catholic:** Regarding this synod in particular, as you understand it, what is Pope Francis' goal in focusing on synodality itself?

**Bishop Rhoades:** The pope really wants synodality, which he says is constitutive of the life of the Church that must be practiced on every level – so not just at the synod, which is the universal level, but also in a diocese, or in a parish, or in other institutions of the Church. He is stressing that everyone should have a voice.

Let me give you an example. In a parish, the idea is that the pastor is obviously the shepherd, but he's not to exercise that leadership and governance without listening to the people. So, there was a lot of criticism of dictatorial or authoritarian styles of leadership, whether it be pastors, bishops, or whom ever – that it is important that we listen and that we discern, that we respect the fact that all

the baptized have received the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and, therefore, it is important that we listen to each other. And also, that the people listen to their pastors, because we're all in this journey together as brothers and sisters in Christ by our baptism.

*"There are some objective criteria that we have to keep in mind, obviously – the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the revealed truths of our faith. They are not up for debate. Now, what's up for debate is how we live our mission."*

So, on a parish level it's important that the people's voice be heard, which is why we have parish pastoral councils, which is often to be the voice of the parishioners. But how are they being used? Are they being effective? Are they really vibrant councils? Do they spiritually discern? Do they pray? We did a lot of prayer

in the midst of our discussions in Rome, because it's not just, 'OK, we're going to argue about something and take a vote.' That's not spiritual discernment.

Synodality doesn't mean that the Church is becoming a democracy, because the process relies heavily on discerning the will of God, the voice of the Holy Spirit, and we have to be careful that we don't listen to a contrary spirit, the spirit of the world. So it's not just people's opinions. There are some objective criteria that we have to keep in mind, obviously – the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the revealed truths of our faith. They are not up for debate. Now, what's up for debate is how we live our mission. How can we do better? How can we make sure that everyone in the Church feels valued and respected? For example, that was one of the things that the pope wanted us to talk about, that no one should feel excluded.

**Today's Catholic:** That leads to the next question, which is that, going into the synod, there was a lot of discussion about marginalized people. Pastoral councils and listening to people within a parish is important, but those people are already involved in the Church. What was discussed about how to bring in people who find themselves outside of the Church?

**Bishop Rhoades:** Pope Francis was insistent that we include those whose voices are not normally heard – the marginalized and, in particular, the poor. And dioceses were urged to seek people out who are on the peripheries. You can look at all different categories, and it also depends on cultures and nations, that people who are in the United States who may feel marginalized may be a different kind of population than those who are marginalized in another country.

Perhaps the number one thing that impacted me by being at this assembly was getting to know bishops from around the world, and other delegates, as well, and listening to their experiences, their challenges, their hopes, their fears. Across the world, in many countries, Catholics and other Christians are persecuted minorities, are marginalized in their cultures, where religious freedom is denied. And there are places that are ravaged by wars and conflicts, or extreme poverty. All these different circumstances of the Church's life, we needed to hear their voices at the synod to make clear that ours is not just a Western, first-world Church.

Obviously, the huge crisis of displaced people and migrants was a major issue, because it's an issue here in our country on our southern border, but also people drowning in the



Mediterranean trying to get to Europe from Africa. We've heard those voices. We even had a prayer service in St. Peter's Square for migrants and refugees. So, on the level of the universal Church, it was very enlightening for me, although I had probably some experience because of my travels with Catholic Relief Services as a board member. But I even learned a lot more at the synod.

While we were there, we had the Hamas attack on Israel. The Patriarch of Jerusalem was one of the delegates at the synod, as were many bishops from that region. But yet, we are called to be a people that walks together, so that's the key when we talk about a synodal Church. It means that we are all walking together, journeying together as brothers and sisters in Christ, so we need to care about one another.

Our mission shouldn't be so parochial that we're only thinking of the people of our parish. We certainly do need to reach out to those who are marginalized or on the peripheries in our parish communities. Maybe there's homeless people in the region of the parish, or the elderly homebound who need to be visited and cared for. The whole idea is that the Church is ordered toward mission. Keep in mind the three themes of the synod were communion, participation, and mission. So, we have this shared mission,

which is really to bear witness to Christ in our day-to-day actions.

**Today's Catholic:** Can you give us a look into the everyday workings of the synod as well as your role as a delegate?

**Bishop Rhoades:** It was a rather grueling schedule. We would meet every morning, always beginning with prayer. And at the beginning of every module – there were four modules during the synod – we would have a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica. Prayer was part of the whole experience, and we would have morning prayer together if we didn't have Mass. For the working groups, there were 10 of us at a table. Basically, we would be discussing a particular question that we had wanted to discuss. So, from 8:30 a.m.

until 12:30 p.m., we would be in our meetings, then we'd have a break for lunch until 4 p.m., then we were back from 4 to 7:30 p.m. So that was pretty heavy.

After the working groups had their meetings, we had a time for discussions. Each working group had to come up with a report to the whole body, which would involve everyone in the hall, and that's when Pope Francis would usually participate. All the reports would be given from whatever it was, 30 or 32 groups. And

then there would be open floor discussions so individual delegates could make interventions from the floor.

By the final week, all of this is being brought together after we had covered the whole four modules. Then we had to do a synthesis document, which was compiled and written by seven relators. That had to have been a lot of work. They were up all night, as you can imagine. After we got a draft of the document, we were allowed to submit amendments, of which there were more than 1,300. So, this group of seven then had to go through all of those and then revise the document accordingly.

On the last day, the synthesis was read aloud in Italian, and because it was 41 pages long, it took three hours to get through it. We voted on each paragraph, and for the paragraph to remain in the document, it needed two-thirds approval. All of the paragraphs were approved. That was a long day. It went into the night. Now, the synthesis document is the basis for the consultation that will take place throughout this year before next October.

**Today's Catholic:** It's unlikely that many of the lay faithful in the diocese will read the synod's synthesis report. What would you say are some of the key takeaways from the document?

**Bishop Rhoades:** Well, the title of the document is "A Synodal Church in Mission," and I think at least the introductory letter from the delegates to the People of God, it's only two pages long, so hopefully people will read that, which is really an instrument for ongoing discernment. [Editor's note: The full document, as well as the introductory letter, can be found at [synod.va](http://synod.va).]

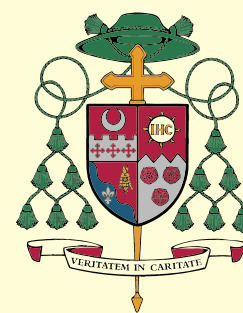
**MISSION, page 4**

*"The Church doctrine behind it is that we're all on a journey together as God's people, and, therefore, it's very important that all the People of God have a voice. ... And the whole method, so to speak, is to discern God's will, to discern the Holy Spirit."*



Photo provided by Bishop Rhoades

Bishop Rhoades is seen on screen speaking to other participants of the Synod of Bishops at Paul VI Hall at the Vatican during the first session of the synod on synodality.



## Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Monday, November 20: 1 p.m. – Annual Meeting of Members of Corporations of Diocese, Catholic Cemeteries and Saint Anne Communities, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne  
Sunday, November 26: 10 a.m. – Confirmation Mass, Sacred Heart Church, Fort Wayne



## Forty Hours Devotion



## Parishes are Listed in Order by Date

### NOVEMBER

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  
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).

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## MISSION, from page 3

I would say one of the key themes, really, is what is synodality? What does it mean to be a synodal Church? The word “synod” itself means “to journey with.” Basically, it’s the understanding that we walk in communion with each other, with Christ, toward the kingdom, and we also walk along with the whole of humanity. I think, at its heart, that is the theme of the synod. The idea is that we are to enter into solidarity with one another, and I think that was quite prominent, that we need to be concerned about our brothers and sisters here and across the world.

Also, the theme of “sensus fidei” is an important one. It’s a theological idea that focuses on the need to understand that through the Holy Spirit, the People of God have a spiritual instinct for the truth of the Gospel. It’s clear this isn’t understood well enough. We need to teach what we mean by that. We’re not talking about popular opinions, particular interests, or the spirit of the age. We have to be careful. All the People of God who have been baptized have been blessed with this sensus fidei, but it’s the responsibility of the magisterium to discern the authentic manifestation of the sensus fidei. Where do you see

the sensus fidei most dramatically? It’s an instinct for the truth of the Gospel. It’s in the lives of the saints. They are the bearers of the light of the sensus fidei.

Another takeaway is to accompany those on the margins; the importance of the preferential option for the poor came up many, many times as so integral to the Gospel – not only material poverty but also spiritual poverty; there are so many who lack a sense of meaning or purpose in their life. So, we need to stand with those who are poor.

Pope Francis issued the apostolic exhortation *Laudate Deum*, a follow-up to *Laudato Si’* on the environment. So that was something that also was a concern is how the ecological crisis especially harms the poor. In the synthesis report, there are matters for

further consideration and concrete proposals, as well.

There was concern about polarization in the Church and the importance that we walk in communion with one another, and the synodal methodology is a way, hopefully, to overcome some of the division and polarization. But there definitely was recognition of that tension in some areas of the world.

*“By baptism, confirmation, and the holy Eucharist, we all have equal dignity, whether we’re ordained, whether we’re consecrated to religious life, or whether we’re members of the laity. There’s various charisms and vocations within the People of God, but we’re all called to be missionaries.”*

Another thing that was highlighted was the fact that we’re all part of the Latin Church. Remember, the Catholic Church also has 23 Eastern Catholic churches. And the heads of all the Eastern Catholic

churches were delegates, so they were prominent at the synod. There was a concern about the migration of a lot of people from the Catholic East into territories like ours, which have a huge Latin majority,

that they be welcomed and served, and that we appreciate more the heritage of our Eastern Catholic brothers and sisters. One thing that came out was the “ecumenism of blood,” how we should recognize jointly the martyrs from our different Christian churches and communities. And they’re hoping that when we have the anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which took place in the year 325 – so the 1,700th anniversary will be celebrated in 2025 – it might be possible for all Christians to celebrate a common date for Easter.

Another topic of conversation at the synod was that all of us are called to discipleship and mission. This comes from the sacraments of initiation. By baptism, confirmation, and the holy Eucharist, we all have equal dignity, whether we’re ordained, whether we’re consecrated to religious life, or whether we’re members of the laity. There’s various charisms and vocations within the People of God, but we’re all called to be missionaries. For example, the life and mission of women in the Church was discussed. I think in some cultures women aren’t very much a part of decision-making in the life of the Church. I think it’s different in places like the United States. But it was much broader than the question of women’s ordination. I think it was a bigger issue of

simply women’s participation in leadership, and that can happen outside of ordination. We have many examples here in the leadership of our own diocese. ... But there are other countries where that might not be the case. And so, developing a deeper understanding of women in the life and mission of the Church was a theme. ...

One last thing I’d like to add that was discussed is that, especially with young people, how do we exercise our mission in the digital environment? It can’t be overstated how much this has changed things. This is crucial for our witness in today’s culture. We really can’t evangelize these days without engaging the digital culture.

**Today’s Catholic:** Now that the first session of the synod is over, what does the next year look like before the final session begins next October?

**Bishop Rhoades:** I really think we need some clarity on how we’re going to proceed with this next stage of consultation. There isn’t a plan yet, and this is something that will likely be discussed at the bishops’ meetings in Baltimore [from November 13-16]. I think the episcopal conferences are the ones being asked to do this, so I would expect that there would be various bodies, for example, that I can consult with, or that we can have in our diocese to reflect on this document, this synthesis, so that we can get input and work its way up, again, to the episcopal conference. We’ll only have 10 months or so until the next session, so the preparation can’t be as extensive as the leadup to the first session, but there will certainly be input that will come on what it is that we need to focus on. It will be challenging, but it’s necessary.



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**Today's Catholic:** In one of your earlier answers, you mentioned polarization in the Church. As a delegate at the synod, you know better than most how skeptical some people were of the synod. Now that you've completed the first session, what would you tell people who were concerned that the synod might be a vehicle to change Church doctrine?

**Bishop Rhoades:** Overall, I did not experience that. The delegates that I got to know, they really love the Church. There may be some who have an agenda to change doctrine, but the way I look at it, that's not what the pope has in mind here.

I think that perhaps we need greater clarity here in explaining the rule of magisterium when it comes to what authentic doctrinal development is. It's not the opinion of the majority, because we're bound by God's revelation, by the Scriptures, by the Tradition of the Church – the tradition with a capital T. Some think that the synod is an effort to come in through the back door to change doctrine. I don't want to be naïve to the fact that there might be some who are trying to do that, but I don't really see that being the role of the synod because of the importance of discernment when it comes to doctrine.

When it comes to doctrine, we're not talking about changes,



Photo provided by Bishop Rhoades  
Bishop Rhoades poses with a woman inside Paul VI Hall during the first session of the Synod of Bishops on synodality at the Vatican.

so to speak, as much as the development of doctrine, because the Holy Spirit doesn't teach something in one century and then change his mind in another century. The word of God is truth. Now, we can come to a better understanding, a deeper understanding of the truths of our faith. St. John Henry Newman is kind of the expert on this matter – other writers, too, but he stands out in my mind. How do you judge something as authentic development of doctrine? It's really penetrating more deeply into the mysteries that have been revealed. But no one has the authority to change the word of God.

**Today's Catholic:** We're only partly done with the synod; there is still the second session next year and then the pope's final post-synodal exhortation on the matter, but as it stands now, what are you hoping are the fruits of this synod for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South bend?

**Bishop Rhoades:** I would say revitalization and mission – in a sense, more participation. I think that begins on the parish level. One of the three keys to the synod is participation. We need to listen more in the process of discernment, especially on the parish level, and at the diocesan level.

I think probably even a greater hope for me is a deeper communion. Because in our country, there's this terrible political polarization, and in a way, it's infiltrated the Church. And that is not who we are called to be. I mean, the Church is communion. And we should be a sign and instrument of the world, in the world ... of the communion between God and his people and among one another. We need to overcome that. Maybe this synodal method can help at least reduce polarization, but we need to return to the spirit of the Gospels, and Jesus and love and truth go together. We can't have one without the other.

*"Maybe this synodal method can help at least reduce polarization, but we need to return to the spirit of the Gospels, and Jesus and love and truth go together. We can't have one without the other."*

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## Pope Joins Knights, Dames of Holy Sepulchre in Praying for Peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis joined leaders of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in praying for peace in Israel and Palestine, “sharing the great sorrow of the Mother Church of Jerusalem. We are sadly witnessing a tragedy unfolding in the very places where the Lord lived, where he taught us through his humanity to love, to forgive, and to do good to all,” the pope said on Thursday, November 9. “And, instead, we see them torn apart by tremendous suffering that is striking the innocent most of all, so many innocent people dead.” The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem was established by the pope in the late 1800s to support the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem with prayers, financial assistance, and regular pilgrimages. The central leadership of the order, the heads of its regional lieutenancies, and the bishops who assist as grand priors of the lieutenancies were in Rome November 6-10 for their “consulta” or general assembly. The focus of the meeting was to be on the education and formation of members, but it included regular updates and discussions about the ongoing fighting between Israel and Hamas and its impact on the local Catholic community. In September, the order’s North Central Lieutenancy held its annual Investiture ceremony in Fort Wayne.

## Doctrinal Dicastery says Transsexuals Can Be Baptized

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – If it would not cause scandal or confusion among other Catholics, “a transsexual – even one who has undergone hormone treatment and gender reassignment surgery – may receive baptism under the same conditions as other faithful,” said a document from officials with the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith. The document, signed on Tuesday, October 31, by Pope Francis and by Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, was posted on the dicastery’s website on Wednesday, November 8. A note published with it said the document was a response to a letter submitted in July by Bishop José Negri of Santo Amaro, Brazil, “containing some questions about the possible participation in baptism and weddings by transsexual persons and homosexual persons.” The ques-

## Knights Give Away 1 Millionth Coat



OSV News photo/Paul Haring, Knights of Columbus

Supreme Knight Patrick E. Kelly, center, presents a \$10,000 check to representatives of St. James Catholic School in Denver during a ceremony on Monday, November 6, at Annunciation Catholic School, also in Denver. An Annunciation student received the 1 millionth coat given away in the Knights’ Coats for Kids program since it was launched in 2009. The Knights distributed nearly 1,000 new coats to underprivileged children at Annunciation, St. James, and three other Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Denver and gave each of the five schools \$10,000 during the November 6 ceremony.

tions about weddings involved whether transsexual or other LGBTQ+ persons could be witnesses at a Catholic wedding. The response to both questions was that “there is nothing in current universal canonical legislation that prohibits” either from serving as a witness at a Catholic marriage. Responses to the questions about baptism were longer, more nuanced, and urged pastoral prudence to minister to the people in question, safeguard the sacrament, and prevent scandal.

## Study: Younger U.S. Priests Likely to Identify as Theologically Conservative

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) – A closer look at the largest survey of U.S. Catholic priests in 50 years has revealed “a major shift in how priests view themselves and their priesthood,” researchers with The Catholic Project stated. Compared to their older peers, younger

priests are far more likely to describe themselves as theologically orthodox or conservative, politically conservative or moderate, and prepared to be “first responders” to the abuse victims they encounter in their ministry. The findings were detailed in “Polarization, Generational Dynamics, and the Ongoing Impact of the Abuse Crisis: Further Insights from the National Study of Catholic Priests,” a November 2023 report released by The Catholic Project, an initiative from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., designed to foster effective collaboration between the clergy and the laity of the Church in the wake of the sexual abuse crisis. According to the report, these trends have been decades in the making, and qualitative interviews with respondents pointed to “two watershed moments” that shape priests’ perception of themselves: the Second Vatican Council and the clergy sexual abuse crisis of 2002.

## Mass Marks Founding of U.S.’s First Seminary for Black Seminarians

BAY ST. LOUIS, Mississippi (OSV News) – The first four African Americans to be ordained Catholic priests at St. Augustine Seminary in 1934 “stood tall in the midst of segregated times,” said retired Bishop J. Terry Steib of Memphis, Tennessee. “They were the men who stood tall, who served the Lord in some trying times. These are men who are role models for us,” the bishop said at a recent Mass celebrated to mark the centennial of the founding of the first seminary in the U.S. to train Black men for the priesthood. Between its inception and closure in 1968, the seminary produced numerous priests, nine of whom later became bishops, including Bishop Steib, the principal celebrant of the centennial Mass on Sunday, October 29, on the seminary grounds. In the Church’s his-

tory among Black people in the United States, the opening day of “the first seminary for young men of their race with a vocation to the priesthood ... will be long remembered as an epoch-making forward step,” Bishop Steib said.

## Pope: No War Is Worth Loss of Even One Life

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – While nations have a right to defend themselves and a responsibility to protect their citizens, “no war is worth the loss of the life of even one human person, a sacred being created in the image and likeness of the Creator,” said a papal message to the Paris Peace Forum. “No war is worth the tears of a mother who has seen her child mutilated or killed,” the message said. “No war is worth the poisoning of our common home.” Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Apostolic Nuncio to France, read the message on Friday, November 10, the first day of the two-day forum of government, business, and civic leaders discussing the theme, “Seeking Common Ground in a World of Rivalry.” “At a time when we are helplessly witnessing the multiplication of armed conflicts, with their attendant suffering, injustice, and sometimes irreversible damage to our common home, the pope wishes for this forum to be a sign of hope,” said the message, which was signed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State.

## Bishop Condemns ‘Heinous’ Killings

YAOUNDE, Cameroon (OSV News) – The bishop of Mamfe in Cameroon’s volatile South West region has strongly condemned the “massacre” that took place on Monday, November 6, in Egbekaw village in his diocese that left at least 20 people dead and several others injured. “Up till this moment, we cannot find any reasons to justify this heinous act,” Bishop Aloysius Fondong Abangalo of Mamfe explained. The attack was carried out by gunmen suspected of being separatist fighters. “It was a very horrible incident that started around 3 a.m. when we started hearing threatening voices,” said Enu Hannibal, a security officer working for Caritas Mamfe. “They started knocking on people’s doors threatening to kill all of them. Those who opened their doors were killed. Those who didn’t open their doors, the assailants forced them open, and shot them. People’s houses were also burnt, and we later on discovered charred bodies in those burnt houses. Some were raped before being killed. Even children were killed. I was a witness to what happened,” he told OSV News.



# Ohio Voters Codify Abortion in State Constitution

BY TODAY'S CATHOLIC STAFF

OSV News – Ohio voters on Tuesday, November 7, approved Issue 1, a measure that will codify abortion access in the state's constitution through fetal viability, typically understood to be 24 weeks gestation. The loss marks another electoral defeat for pro-life ballot measures in the wake of the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision. Ohio voters passed Issue 1, with nearly 57 percent voting "yes."

The measure, advanced by the Ohio Physicians for Reproductive Rights and Ohioans for Reproductive Freedom, will legalize abortion up to the point of fetal viability – the gestational maturity at which a baby may be capable of living outside the uterus – 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 is not being enforced amid a legal challenge, the passage of Issue 1 will likely block its implementation.

Supporters of the measure

argued it would return the state to the legal standard set before the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June of 2022. Opponents argued 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."

In a November 7 statement, Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati said, "The people of Ohio missed this important opportunity to demonstrate that the health and safety of women, the fundamental rights of parents, and the lives of preborn children deserve protection."

"Despite this outcome, we are grateful for all of you who prayed, educated yourselves and others, and voted NO on this horrific amendment," Archbishop Schnurr said. "And we praise God for the gift of His great love and mercy which He continues to pour out to us in good times and in bad."

In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Antonio Marchi, Executive Director of Right to Life Michiana, released a statement on November 8, saying, "Though Indiana is leading the way when it



OSV News photo/Megan Jelinger, Reuters

**A voter fills out her ballot at a polling station in Columbus, Ohio, on Tuesday, November 7. Voters in Ohio passed Issue 1, a referendum that will enshrine expansive legal protections for abortion in the state constitution. Bishops and other pro-life leaders spoke out strongly against the measure.**

comes to protecting women, children, and families from the horror of abortion, we are now surrounded by three states [Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois] that have some of the most radical abortion policies across

the nation." He added: "My heart aches for mothers in our community who will cross the border in the midst of fear to end the lives of the preborn children in their care because they have been sold short by

the lie that they have no other choice. People are quick to make decisions they would not normally make when they are in pain. We cannot let this setback carry momentum to capitalize on vulnerable moms and babies in our community. And we cannot let what happened in Ohio yesterday happen here."

The measure's passage, Archbishop Schnurr said, "shows that there remains a desperate need for conversion of hearts and minds to a culture of life in our country, one that respects the inherent dignity and sacredness of every human being from conception to natural death." He added: "This conversion will only come about through the witness of our earnest prayer and compassionate care for the most vulnerable among us. I urge everyone in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to redouble support for the many Catholic ministries that provide material resources and personal accompaniment to women, children, and families so that abortion ceases to be a consideration."

# Pope Removes Bishop Strickland Following Vatican Investigation

BY MARIA WIERING AND  
PETER JESSERER MITH

(OSV News) – Pope Francis has "relieved" Bishop Joseph E. Strickland from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Tyler, Texas, the Holy See Press Office announced on Saturday, November 11. Simultaneously, Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas, as apostolic administrator to oversee the diocese until a new bishop is appointed.

Speculation about his future in the diocese has swirled for months following the bishop's May 12 post on Twitter (now known as X), accusing the pontiff of "undermining the deposit of faith."

The pope's decision followed an address given by Bishop Strickland at a public gathering in Rome on Tuesday, October 31, where he read from a lengthy letter, attributed to a "dear friend," that accused Pope Francis of being, among other things, a "usurper of Peter's chair." Later, the bishop opined himself that Pope Francis was supporting an "attack on the sacred" coming out of the Vatican.

The speculation about Bishop Strickland's future was accelerated by a June apostolic visitation of the Diocese



OSV News photo/CNS file photo, Bob Roller

**BISHOP JOSEPH E. STRICKLAND**

of Tyler conducted by retired Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Arizona, and Bishop Dennis J. Sullivan of Camden, New Jersey.

On November 11, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, Metropolitan Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, released a public statement on the bishop's removal, explaining that after the apostolic visitation of the Tyler Diocese took place – which he described as "an exhaustive inquiry into all aspects of the governance and leadership of the Diocese of Tyler by its Ordinary" – it was recommended "the continuation in office of Bishop Strickland was not feasible."

"After months of careful consideration by the Dicastery for Bishops and the Holy Father, the decision was reached that the resignation of Bishop Strickland should be

requested," Cardinal DiNardo said in his statement. "Having been presented with that request on November 9, Bishop Strickland declined to resign from office. Thereafter, on November 11, the Holy Father removed Bishop Strickland from the Office of Bishop of Tyler."

"Let us keep Bishop Strickland, the clergy, and faithful of the Diocese of Tyler, and Bishop Vasquez in our prayers," Cardinal DiNardo concluded.

Bishop Strickland had indicated previously that he would not resign willingly from office. The Pillar reported in September that Bishop Strickland's removal had been recommended to the Holy Father following the apostolic visitation.

In a September 20 blog post on his website, bishopstrickland.com, the bishop addressed rumors of an impending resignation, saying to resign "would be me abandoning the flock that I was given charge of by Pope Benedict XVI." However, he said that he would respect Pope Francis' authority if the pontiff removed him from the diocese.

Many had connected the apostolic visitation to Bishop Strickland's vocal criticisms of Pope Francis and other Church prelates, especially on X, where

he has more than 150,000 followers.

The bishop himself likened the apostolic visitation to "being called to the principal's office." In July, he said on his weekly radio show, "The Bishop Strickland Hour," that he believed the apostolic visitation was initiated "because I've been bold enough, I love the Lord enough and his Church to simply keep preaching the truth."

At the same time, he acknowledged that in the diocese "there have been some administrative issues, and I'm sure people are concerned." Overall, he said, "the diocese is really in good shape."

The October 31 Rome Life Forum, sponsored by LifeSiteNews, was billed as a "two-day strategy conference ... held immediately after the Vatican's synod on synodality, which threatens to formalize heretical teachings on the family." Organizers said the event was meant to "focus on confronting the evils of the Deep Church and Deep State and their involvement in the Great Reset agenda."

Bishop Strickland gave a 46-minute public address, which included him reading at length from a letter he said was written to him by an unnamed "dear friend." This letter accused Pope Francis of

being "an expert at producing cowards by preaching dialogue and openness in a welcoming spirit and by highlighting always his own authority."

The letter outright attacked Pope Francis' validity as the successor of St. Peter, claiming he had ousted his predecessor, the late-Benedict XVI (who denied such allegations): "Would you now allow this one, who has pushed aside the true pope and has attempted to sit on a chair that is not his, define what the Church is to be?"

Bishop Strickland said the letter's words were "challenging" but did not dispute the allegations.

Bishop Strickland himself said in his address that "one of the most frustrating things coming out of the Vatican, and it's supported at least by Pope Francis, is the attack on the sacred."

Nine days later, Pope Francis asked for his resignation, before finally removing him on November 11.

Bishop Strickland did not mention his removal when posting to social media, but on November 11 he posted a message on X urging followers to "rejoice always that ... no matter what the day brings Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, yesterday, today, and forever."



# Miss Virginia's Aims to Raise Money for New Parking Lot

BY BETHANY BEEBE

For some members of our community, life has presented a lot of challenges.

When those challenges extend to getting enough to eat for those in Fort Wayne, Miss Virginia's Food Pantry has been there to help, and it is the hope of members of the organization that a new parking lot makes accessing those goods a little safer and easier for all involved. To fund the endeavor, Miss Virginia's has embarked on a fundraising campaign, and their current GoFundMe – an online fundraising tool – aims to make possible the completion of that endeavor.

Miss Virginia's Food Pantry, a partner organization of St. Mary's Soup Kitchen, operates out of the small former home of South Hanna Street resident Virginia Schrantz, who opened her home to anyone in need of assistance. That legacy has continued. Now open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for distribution of donated food, both the pantry itself and the surrounding neighborhood are busy with traffic. Greg Witte, Executive Director of the pantry, said that in the third quarter of this year, 11,486 people were served. While a large number in its own right, Witte estimates that only about 8 percent of those who enjoy the services of the pantry arrive and depart via a means of transportation other than cars.

In many cases, multiple families arrive in one car. Witte calls his most reasonable estimate four guests per car. Doing the math, that would mean 2,871 cars filtered through the tiny gravel lot during this year's third quarter, turning off what Board Member Dan McNamara calls the "very busy north-south thoroughfare with heavy commercial truck, bus, and automobile traffic."

With about \$200,000 of the \$250,000 desired, the GoFundMe has been operating since September. Fundraising began for the parking lot project last year, and McNamara said that trying to obtain needed funds "is ongoing and will continue until the needed funds have been raised."

Miss Virginia's is trying to fund a 36-space parking lot to address what McNamara called "a bit of a free-for-all." Guests leave their cars in a gravel lot, on the grass, on the street, and generally access the facility off a dangerously busy thoroughfare. The new lot, the planning of which has been done by Grinsfelder Associates, would enter off of Brackenridge Street and vent traffic in a one-way



Photos by Bethany Beebe

**The need for safety has reached a critical point for clients needing food for their families. A parking lot fund drive is currently underway.**

flow. Witte said the new lot would not hold every car that visits, but it would significantly alleviate the issue. Both Witte and McNamara are most concerned about the safety of all involved, and they believe this parking lot is the best way to address the issue.

"We have had minor accidents and many near-accidents because of these conditions," McNamara said. "The traffic makes it difficult to get in and out of ... cars safely."

Helping Miss Virginia's safely navigate the waters of online fund acquisition, Fort Wayne's LABOV Marketing Communications and Training agency has been doing pro-bono work in creating the GoFundMe. The agency set up the crowdsourcing account, has monthly meetings with Miss Virginia's, and pushes two social media posts each month to encourage public support of the endeavor.

Time is of the essence for the project, officials said, and

## Pave The Way To Safety Miss Virginia's Food Pantry

[gofund.me/ca50ae49](https://gofund.me/ca50ae49)



work will not begin until the money has been raised. Bids from contractors are currently being taken; two have been received, and two more are in process.

"Assuming we can raise the funds, we are probably looking



**The current parking situation is becoming more and more untenable for the many people who utilize the food pantry to meet weekly nutrition needs.**

at next spring to complete the work," McNamara said.

The GoFundMe contributions will finish a campaign already well supported, and one that is headed by an organization actively seeking to independently support capital projects. "We ... have on the drawing board," McNamara said, "one grant application to a local foundation that funds capital projects." One anonymous donor has already given \$25,000, a local foundation gave \$20,000, a few donations of \$5,000 each came in, and Steel Dynamics offered \$23,000. The SDI contribution, according to Witte, was the beginning of the budget for this endeavor. "It has just kind of grown from there," Witte

said.

No capital is needed to change any distribution processes in place at Miss Virginia's, only the lot in question. Another aspect of Miss Virginia's that would not change is the help it offers patrons beyond food distribution. For example, the site has acted as host to HIV testing and clothing distributions.

Patrons will enjoy the support of the most recent GoFundMe campaign that can be found by searching "Miss Virginia's" at GoFundMe.com. For those interested in donating, click the "Donate Now" button and follow the prompts, helping a worthy cause where even a little helps a lot.



# Bishop Celebrates Confirmation at St. Jude in South Bend

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH

St. Jude Parish in South Bend has had a busy fall as the community recently celebrated its 75th anniversary and hosted a relic of St. Jude from Rome. What better way to close out the year of celebrations than with the Sacrament of Confirmation?

On the morning of Saturday, November 4, Bishop Rhoades celebrated the confirmation Mass for the eighth graders at St. Jude. Sixteen young people, most of them parishioners at St. Jude Parish, received the sacrament from Bishop Rhoades, who recently had returned to the diocese after his monthlong stay in Rome, where he participated in the general assembly of the Synod of Bishops. "I'm still under jetlag," he joked to the congregation.



Photos by Kasia Balsbaugh

**Bishop Rhoades confers the Sacrament of Confirmation on young people during Mass at St. Jude Parish in South Bend on Saturday, November 4.**



**The confirmands pray and sing at the opening of their confirmation Mass at St. Jude Parish in South Bend on Saturday, November 4.**

Despite the quick travel turnaround, the bishop took the time to interact personally with the confirmands. He asked them questions about the Faith and talked about the letters they had sent to him as part of their confirmation preparation – for instance, telling a student who had chosen St. Cecilia as her patron that he had visited that saint's basilica while he was in Rome. Another student had chosen Blessed Dom Justo Takayama, a Japanese samurai, as his

patron saint. Bishop Rhoades told him that he had had to look up information on Blessed Takayama after reading the student's letter. "I've confirmed thousands of young people, and I'm always finding new saints," Bishop Rhoades said.

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades gave the young people their last words of preparation before the sacrament. While noting that the Holy Spirit already dwells in us Christians through baptism, he said, "Confirmation gives you even more grace, the special grace to bear witness to Christ in your words and deeds."

Bishop Rhoades also spoke on one of the Mass readings, Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, where Paul speaks of the people "sealed with the promise of the Holy Spirit." "That's what will happen to you today," Bishop Rhoades told the confirmands, adding that the mission of being a Christian in Paul's day is still the same today – the mission to live according to the Gospel.

Bishop Rhoades also offered advice for life as a confirmed member of the Church. He encouraged those being confirmed to develop relationships with patron saints, to continually grow in faith, to be aware of what gift of the Holy Spirit they need most at each time in their lives. In times of difficulty, he told them, "Ask the Holy Spirit, he is the coun-

selor of our souls."

Bishop Rhoades also told the confirmands that he hoped they would strive for sainthood. "I doubt if any of you will be called to martyrdom, but you're being called to live your faith in Christ and not be a lukewarm Christian."

At the end of his homily, he added, "Only God can satisfy our deepest hungers, our deepest desires."

Heather Buison, Director of Faith Formation at St. Jude, helped to guide the students on their confirmation journeys. She has been preparing students for confirmation for 13 years, six of which she has spent at St. Jude. "This current eighth-grade class holds a special place in my heart, because they were my first class I helped prepare for first Communion when I started at St. Jude," she said.

Buison added that formal preparations for confirmation begin in seventh grade, when the students prayerfully pick their sponsors. Service hours, prayer, and conversations are also a large part of the preparation.

"It is always a blessing to be able to help the young people grow in their faith so as to prepare their hearts for the gift of confirmation," Buison said.

The next day, Bishop Rhoades traveled south in the diocese to confirm students at St. Jude Catholic Church in Fort Wayne.



## ST. THOMAS MORE

A C A D E M Y

### CONTACT

574-222-9195

### Lower School

308 S. Scott St.  
South Bend, IN

### Upper School

312 W. Colfax St.  
South Bend, IN

 [admissions@stmasb.org](mailto:admissions@stmasb.org)

[WWW.STMASB.ORG](http://WWW.STMASB.ORG)

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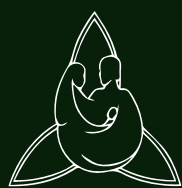
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# 'I AM HERE':

## Personal Testimonies Share the Power of the Eucharist

In June of 2022, the Archdiocese of Detroit launched a project in conjunction with the National Eucharistic Revival that aimed to foster in the faithful a deeper sense of devotion to Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist by inviting those in Detroit and beyond to share personal stories of how the Eucharist has impacted their lives in a real and powerful way.

Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron, in his pastoral letter on mission and evangelization, "Unleash the Gospel," highlights the indispensable role of personal testimony in evangelization. "Testimony has a unique power to touch hearts since it is almost impossible to ignore the witness of someone who has encountered Jesus personally and whose life has been transformed by Him. The townspeople of the Samaritan woman at the well came to faith in Jesus because of her testimony, which eventually led them to encounter Him themselves (Jn 4:39, 42)."

The project, "I AM HERE," contains hundreds of personal stories of how the Eucharist has transformed people across the country, including dozens of Catholics who live and worship in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Throughout the next several months as the Church continues to prepare for the National Eucharistic Congress, which will be held June 17-21, 2024, in Indianapolis, Today's Catholic will feature the stories of local men and women who have submitted their powerful testimonies to "I AM HERE." To read more, or to submit your own story of how the Eucharist has shaped your life, visit [iam-here.org](http://iam-here.org). To learn more about the upcoming National Eucharistic Congress, or to purchase discounted tickets, visit [diocesefwsb.org/](http://diocesefwsb.org/)

### 'My Life Has Radically Changed'

By Jared Horban  
Corpus Christi Community, South Bend

While I was attending Ball State University in 2020, I was encouraged by FOCUS missionaries to begin going to daily Mass. Since then, my life has radically changed. I have physically, mentally, and spiritually been transformed into becoming more like Christ each day. How awesome! From the Eucharist, I have been able to see the relationship that God desires to have with each and every one of us – one that is intimate, as we literally consume Him! God also desires for us to be transformed internally. The road to self-mastery is impossible without Christ in the Eucharist. Christ's readiness for us to receive Him, in His complete gift of self, makes me desire to become more and more like Him every day!

I have experienced the healing and transformative power of the Eucharist through my relationships, in freedom from past struggles and sins, and in an unending desire for closeness with God. Little did I know before heading out on this journey of daily Mass that my vision and focus were so clouded. I constantly measured myself by those around me, but I didn't look at the summit of creation, Jesus Himself! Since going to Mass daily, I have been confronted with my own brokenness and poverty; this is something I had never truly contemplated. I felt like

the Eucharist was given to me to get through life rather than to be truly impacted by it. I certainly never thought I would ever get over my past failures as a teammate, son, and friend. Through the Eucharist, I have come to know a love and peace that gives me the strength and desire to express its power to others. The Eucharist has altered my focus and direction in life. It has shown me the need for community and the need for relationships with God and other people.

I love going to Mass and receiving holy Communion because I know the power of Christ's love. Christ gave Himself to us on the cross so that I may now have my truest and only identity – as a son of God! Jesus took on our sins, suffered, and rose from the dead for my sake and for all those around me. Christ altered the human condition in His resurrection, giving me a chance to be called God's son. Christ not only gave of Himself on that day but continues to give, each day, if possible, a chance to become more like Him – someone capable of sacrifice, someone capable of love in its truest form.

Each Mass when the Eucharist is consecrated, I bow my head and pray, "Christ, allow me to be able to give a complete gift of self as You did on the cross." I also love going to Mass to be able to see other people taking part in this great sacrament!



While I am at adoration and praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament, I often think about how radically different and mysterious our faith truly is. Adoration is one of those spaces in which I love to experience Christ's love. While at adoration, I take on the image of being before Christ at one of His many teachings expressed

in the Bible, sitting before Him, and experiencing His words and His love, and truly being able to experience the truth He is expressing. Being in the Real Presence of Christ in that way expresses the closeness that God desires to have with us.

### 'I Am Not the Same Person I Was 16 Years Ago'

By Steve Till  
Most Precious Blood Church, Fort Wayne

My life has completely changed since I came to realize the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. I was away from the Church for 40 years when the Holy Spirit revealed to me the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and I had to return to the faith I was born into. Today, I am not the same person I was 16 years ago.

I have developed a real friendship with Jesus Christ, and adoration allows me to communicate with Jesus on a personal level.



## 'He Fills Me with an Unexplainable Peace'

By Deborah Hillman  
Our Lady of Good Hope Church, Fort Wayne

Like everyone else, I know what it's like to feel sad, lonely, frustrated, and unappreciated. This crazy world can surely pull me down. But I'm learning that the best defense is a heavenly offense, and that starts with attending daily Mass.

What began as a soft, gentle pull has grown into a stronger tug to go to Mass daily, and if I don't make it, I get the feeling that something is missing. Although it happens ever so slowly, I am able to look back

and see how the Lord has changed my heart and made me stronger when dealing with the world around me. I find myself unable to say no to whatever He's calling me to do. When the God of the universe offers to share all of His time, all of His attention, all of His care, all of His love in a very personal way with me, why would I ever refuse?

I give my time and love to Jesus, and He gives His time and love back to me. That fills me with an unexplainable peace that helps me to love others.

## 'It Unites Me to Jesus in the Most Intimate Way'

By Chris Wroe  
St. Charles Borromeo Church, Fort Wayne

The Eucharist feeds my soul, bringing the peace and joy of Christ into my heart. It is Jesus' body and blood, uniting me to Him in the most intimate way. His love is seen in each Eucharistic host, reminding us of His sacrifice for us, dying upon a cross.

I was a helper on pilgrimages to Lourdes and witnessed amazing transformations through the Eucharist. Miracles happen. My mother was dying, so she received the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and holy Communion. After the priest left, she woke up and was very much alive! If we doubt the power of the Eucharist, we are doubting the power of Jesus.

I love Mass because it takes me to the Last Supper and reminds me of how much Jesus loves me (and all of us). The readings remind me of how His presence was foretold and how God never deceives us. The presence of other people during Mass reminds me that we are one

Church, the bride of Christ and God's children. The presence of others in the Mass also reminds me of the good people who have died – some martyrs for the Faith and others who did what they could to share their faith throughout their lives. In the Eucharist, we come together as one Church to be the one Body that is Christ within our world. He lives through us.

Missing Mass leaves me empty and less prepared to face whatever challenges may come my way. Jesus wants us to know Him as friend and Savior. It begins with prayer – a conversation – and taking holy Communion, allowing Him into our very beings.

Adoration is my private time with Jesus and when I am most at peace in His presence. I set my attention upon Him. In my heart, I listen to whatever thoughts He gives to me. I try to empty my thoughts of what is going on in my life, but sometimes I need to bring these to His attention. He is my best friend, so sometimes I want to listen, and sometimes I need to speak.

## 'I Can See the Difference of Life with the Eucharist'

By Jackie Moody  
St. Monica Church, Mishawaka

I spent three years away from the sacraments because I was not in a state of grace. I continued to attend Mass and was involved at my parish during that time, but I did not present myself for Communion. I can't explain the ache I felt and how much I missed that

time with Jesus. Strangely, I felt the healing and transformative power of the Eucharist when I was away from it.

Praise God, and through His mercy, I am on the other side and once again in full communion with the Catholic Church. As dark as that time away from the sacraments was for me, I am truly grateful for it. In hindsight, I can see

## 'A Feeling of Goosebumps Went Through Me'

By Tim Martin  
Queen of Peace Church, Mishawaka

I love going to Mass because Jesus continually offers Himself to us, giving us opportunities to adore Him and spend quality time with Him. I've dubbed adoration as an encounter with the Infinite. It is an exchange of love between His pure love for me and my tiny, imperfect love for Him.

I am a minister of the sick and an extraordinary minister of holy Communion at Mass. Twelve years ago, I was out of work, allowing me time during the week to bring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to the homebound. I had been bringing Our Lord to an elderly parishioner for a few months. She lived a couple of blocks from Queen of Peace Parish in Mishawaka. I was a block from

church with Jesus in my pyx when I heard a voice over my shoulder say, "This will be the last time you will bring Me to her." I was startled upon hearing these words, leaving me wide-eyed.

When I got there, I met our parishioner, who seemed no different than before. She received Jesus with reverence. After finishing the Eucharistic ritual for the homebound, I felt as if I was seeing her as she would look in heaven. I normally brought Jesus to her two days a week, so she said, "Well, I'll see you tomorrow." A feeling of goosebumps went through me, and I did not know what to say in reply.

Because of what I'd been told en route to her house, what could I say? After stammering a bit, I kindly said, "I'll see you tomorrow, take good care."

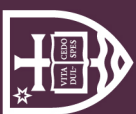
After leaving her house, I did some errands, not returning home until 1 p.m. I saw a light on the phone indicating a message; It was from the daughter of the parishioner I'd brought Jesus to. She said, "Don't bother to bring Jesus tomorrow, as Mom passed away an hour ago." I was overwhelmed! It's amazing how Jesus uses us sinners to be His arms and legs to bring His Real Presence to His people!





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Psalm 118:1

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# HOMEMADE WITH LOVE

*Thanksgiving is not only about giving thanks to God for all we have and all He does for us; it is also a time we spend with family enjoying food and fellowship. We at Today's Catholic asked our readers to share a favorite recipe of their most loved Thanksgiving dish. We are so grateful for the numerous responses, and we hope you enjoy (and maybe try out) these wonderful recipes!*

## PHILLIP'S PIE CRUST RECIPE

– Carolyn Helman

### Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/3 cup shortening such as Crisco  
1/3 cup chilled butter  
5 tbsp. cold water

### Directions:

Cut shortening into the flour to a grain like corn meal. A pastry knife is very good for this.

Cut butter into flour-shortening mixture coarsely, perhaps pea size lumps.

Sprinkle water onto mixture and knead to blend water into dough. Dough should just hold together in a tiny ball. Divide dough into two equal balls. Place one ball between two sheets of wax paper then roll to size and shape of crust.

This recipe is for one 9-inch double crust pie and allows a generous lattice.

## GOOSEBERRY PIE

– Carolyn Helman

### Ingredients:

4 cups fresh or frozen gooseberries  
1 tbsp. cornstarch  
1/4 tsp. cinnamon  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 tbsp. quick cooking

tapioca (heaping)

1 tbsp. butter

### Directions:

The berries should be picked at their prime, firm and only a few turned red. They should be cleaned. Remove stems and flower ends. They may be frozen and thawed just before use.

Mix sugar, cornstarch, and tapioca as dry ingredients. This reduces lumping. Add to berries and mix all together. Let sit while preparing the pie crust. Line 9-inch pie dish with one rolled crust, fill with berries, cover with second rolled crust. A lattice of half inch strips for the top crust is a nice touch and little additional effort is needed.

Cool before serving. "We have had Gooseberry Pie for Thanksgiving and other special family dinners. It was a favorite pie of my husband. He liked it so well that he planted Gooseberry plants wherever we lived. But picking the berries is an act of love because of the thorns. We like to use the frozen berries because you do not need to cook the berries to soften them. Plus, a ready-made pie crust works great."

## CROCK POT DRESSING

– Jean Mettler

### Ingredients:

1 cup butter  
2 cups chopped onion  
2 cups chopped celery  
2 8-oz. cans mushrooms, drained  
12-13 cups dry bread cubes  
1 tsp. poultry seasoning  
1 1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 tsp. pepper  
3 1/2 to 4 1/2 cups turkey or chicken broth  
2 beaten eggs

### Directions:

Melt butter in skillet; add onion, celery, and mushrooms. Sauté. Pour over bread cubes in large mixing bowl; add all seasoning and toss well.

Pour broth over this; add eggs and mix well. Pack in crock pot. (Do not stir.) Cook on high 45 minutes and then low for 4-8 hours.

## PUMPKIN DESSERT

– Sandra La Violette

### Ingredients:

1 large can pumpkin  
3 beaten eggs  
1 cup milk  
1 cup sugar  
2 tsps. cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. cloves  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1 pkg. yellow cake mix  
1 1/2 sticks oleo, melted  
1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts

### Directions:

Mix first seven ingredients well and pour into 9x13 greased pan. Sprinkle cake mix over top. Drizzle oleo over that. Sprinkle nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 1/2 hours. Serve with whipped cream.

## CHERRY-O-CREAM CHEESE PIE

– Sharon Minick

### Ingredients:

#### 9-inch cornflake crumb crust:

1 cup cornflake crumbs (easy to make your own)  
2 tbsp. sugar  
1/3 cup margarine or butter softened

### Directions:

Combine and put into bottom and up sides of 9-inch pie pan.

### Ingredients:

#### Filling:

1 8-oz. pkg. regular cream cheese (not light or low fat) softened and then whipped  
1 can Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk (not light)  
1/3 cup lemon juice  
1 tsp. vanilla

### Directions:

Beat together first two ingredients. Add in lemon juice and vanilla. Pour into crust and chill in refrigerator. Top with chilled can of cherry pie filling (not light). Serve and enjoy.

"This recipe has been used in our family for 40+ years. It is requested frequently for birthdays or just because. One time, when camping with our camping group, we shared a pavilion with another camping group. We had made two of these pies; when it came time for dessert, folks were almost fighting in order to get a piece of Cherry-O-Cream Cheese Pie. The cornflake crumb crust really makes this pie."

## BEEF STEW

– Julie Strack

### Ingredients:

2 lb. stew meat  
2 cups onions (chopped)  
2 cups carrots  
2 cups potatoes (chopped)

2 cups celery  
1 small can mushrooms, drained  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tbsp. sugar  
1/4 tsp. pepper  
5 tbsp. tapioca  
3 cups V-8 juice

### Directions:

Combine all ingredients and bake at 250 degrees for five hours. "This was my mom's recipe. She was a good cook. I've given it to many people."

## RICE

– Pearl Hinora

### Ingredients:

1 cup uncooked regular rice  
1/4 cup canola oil  
1 small onion finely chopped  
1 tsp. salt  
2 cups cold water

### Directions:

Brown rice and onion in oil. Add salt and water. Heat rice water to boiling. Stir once or twice. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes. (Do not lift lid or stir.) Remove from heat. Let stand for 15 minutes and serve.

## GOLDEN LILY COOKIE

– Pearl Hinora

### Ingredients:

2 sticks butter softened  
8-oz. cream cheese  
2 cups flour  
Apricot jelly

### Directions:

Mix butter, cream cheese, and flour by hand. Blend until it forms soft dough. Refrigerate until firm. Roll out on lightly floured surface to 1/8 in thickness. Cut





# VE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

into 3-inch squares. Spoon 1 tsp jelly in center of each square. Fold and place 1-inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Brush with beaten egg (Optional). Bake at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned. Sprinkle with powdered sugar (Optional).

## PUMPKIN CHIFFON PIE

– Phyllis Himschoot

### Ingredients:

3/4 cup brown sugar  
1 envelope unflavored gelatin  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. nutmeg  
1/4 tsp. ginger  
3 slightly beaten egg yolks  
3/4 cup milk  
1 1/4 cups canned or mashed cooked pumpkin  
3 egg whites  
1/3 cup granulated sugar  
1 9-inch Graham-cracker crust (regular pie crust works too)

### Directions:

In saucepan, combine brown sugar, gelatin, salt, and spices. Combine egg yolks and milk; stir into brown-sugar mixture. Cook and stir until mixture comes to a boil. Remove from heat; stir in pumpkin.

Chill until mixture mounds slightly when spooned. (Test every now and then – don't let it get too stiff.) Beat egg whites until soft peaks form; gradually add granulated sugar, beating to stiff peaks. Fold pumpkin mixture thoroughly into egg whites.

Turn into crust. Chill until firm. Garnish with whipped cream; drizzle with vanilla caramel sauce.



## STRAWBERRY LUSCIOUS

– Linda Glaze

### Ingredients:

1 large pkg. strawberry gelatin  
2 cups boiling water  
1 large container of frozen strawberries (partially thawed)  
1 can crushed pineapple drained (20 oz.)  
2 large bananas  
1 small (8 oz.) carton of cool whip  
8 oz pkg. cream cheese (softened)  
1/3 cup powdered sugar  
1 tsp. Vanilla

### Directions:

Dissolve gelatin into boiling water. Add strawberries with juice, pineapple, and bananas. Pour half of this mixture into an 8x12 dish and chill until set. Mix cream cheese, powdered sugar, and vanilla. Add cool whip into this mixture. Place over gelatin that has chilled and set up. Carefully pour remaining gelatin mixture over the cream cheese layer. Chill to set. Enjoy!

## LEMON GRAHAM CRACKER CHEESECAKE

– Linda Glaze

### Ingredients:

#### Crust:

30 graham crackers  
1/4 lb. melted margarine

#### Directions:

Crush the graham crackers and save some for topping. Mix rest with melted margarine and press into 9x13 pan or dish. Bake in oven at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until golden.

### Filling:

1 small pkg. lemon Jello

#### Directions:

Dissolve lemon Jello in 1 cup boiling water. Refrigerate until it begins to gel.

### Ingredients:

#### Whip:

1 large can of chilled Milnot  
8 oz pkg. cream cheese  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 tsp. Vanilla

#### Directions:

Mix cream cheese with sugar and vanilla. Add to whipped Milnot and then add the Jello. Mix well but DO NOT beat. Pour into crust and sprinkle remaining graham cracker crumbs on top. Enjoy!

## CORN CASSEROLE

– Linda Glaze

### Ingredients:

1 stick of margarine  
15 oz. whole kernel corn  
15 oz. cream corn  
8.5 oz. Jiffy cornbread mix  
2 eggs  
1 cup sour cream  
2 tbsp. sugar  
Salt and pepper to taste

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease an 8x8 dish. Melt the margarine. Combine in a bowl all ingredients, mixing well. Pour mixture into pan and bake for 30-45 minutes or until golden brown and a knife inserted in center corners comes out clean. \*Double this recipe for 9x13 pan or dish.

## CUCUMBERS AND ONIONS

– Linda Glaze

### Ingredients:

2 cucumbers peeled and sliced thin  
1 onion sliced thin  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/4 cup vinegar  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1/8 tsp. pepper  
1/2 tsp. celery seed

### Directions:

Place cucumbers and onions in a glass dish. Combine dressing ingredients and pour over vegetables. Cover and refrigerate. \*This recipe can easily be doubled.

## PASTA SALAD

– Linda Glaze

### Ingredients:

3/4 cup ranch dressing or any dressing you prefer  
8 oz. any type of pasta  
1 cup broccoli florets  
1 cup carrots  
1 cup radishes  
1 cup bell peppers  
1 cup cherry tomatoes (halved)  
1 cup cucumbers  
1/2 diced red onion  
1/2 cup thawed frozen peas  
1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese or your preference of cheese  
1/4 cup black olives

### Directions:

Cook pasta according to package directions. Place in cold water to cool. Drain thoroughly. Combine remaining ingredients. Add the dressing of your choice and toss gently to coat. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. \*Any combination of vegetables may be used – whatever you and your family enjoy.



RECIPES, from page 17

## SPECIAL BROCCOLI CASSEROLE

– Sandy Celmer

### Ingredients:

1 to 2 heads broccoli (cut stems off)  
2 tbsp. minced onion  
2 tbsp. butter  
1 ½ cup dairy sour cream  
2 tsp. sugar  
1 tsp. white vinegar  
1/2 tsp. poppy seed  
1/2 tsp. paprika  
1/4 tsp. salt  
Dash of cayenne pepper  
1/3 cup chopped cashews

### Directions:

Cook broccoli until just tender and drain. Sauté onion in melted butter. Remove from heat and stir in sour cream, sugar, vinegar, poppy seed, paprika, salt, and cayenne pepper. Arrange broccoli on heated platter and pour sour cream sauce over top. Sprinkle with cashews. Yields 6-8 servings.

## CHEESY CHICKEN CRESCENT

– Sandy Celmer

Great recipe for leftover turkey!

### Ingredients:

1 ¾ cubed, cooked chicken or turkey or 2 (5 oz.) cans boned chicken, drained  
1/2 cup (2 oz.) shredded cheddar or American cheese  
8 oz. can Pillsbury refrigerated crescent rolls (or Italian flavor)  
10 ½ oz. can condensed cream of chicken soup  
1 cup milk

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In small bowl, combine chicken and 2 tbsp. cheese. Separate crescent dough into 8 triangles. Place about 3 tablespoons chicken mixture on a wide end of each triangle. Roll up. In medium saucepan, combine soup, milk, and 1/4 cup cheese. Heat until cheese melts.

Pour half of soup mixture into ungreased 8 or 9-inch pan (reserve remaining soup mixture for sauce). Arrange filled crescents over hot soup mixture. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until golden brown. Sprinkle with remaining 2 tbsp. cheese. Return to oven for 5 to 10 minutes until the cheese is melted. Serve with remaining sauce. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

## EASY MACARONI AND CHEESE

– Salli Strack

### Ingredients:

8 oz. macaroni  
1/4 cup margarine  
1/4 cup flour  
2 cups cheddar cheese  
2 cups milk

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cook and drain macaroni. Melt margarine and remove from heat. Alternate adding flour and milk, stirring between. Remove from stove. Add cheese reserving 1/4 cup for topping. Bake for 20 minutes.

## CARROTS LANGENESE

– Irmhild Niederholtmeyer

### Ingredients:

1 lb. (6) medium carrots  
1 chicken bouillon cube  
1/2 cup boiling water  
4 tbsp. butter or margarine  
3 medium onions sliced (about 2 cups)  
1 tsp. all-purpose flour  
1/4 tsp. salt  
Dash of pepper  
3/4 cup hot water

### Directions:

Dissolve bouillon cube in 1/2 cup water. Add carrots and cook covered for 10 minutes. Melt butter in skillet. Add onions and cook covered for 15 minutes. Stir occasionally. Stir in flour, salt, and pepper. Add 3/4 cup hot water. Bring to boil. Add carrots and chicken stock. Simmer uncovered for about 10 minutes. Add a pinch of sugar before serving.

## SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

– Cathy Leonard

### Ingredients:

1 large (29 oz.) can of sweet potatoes  
3/4 stick melted margarine  
1 ¼ cups sugar  
1/2 tsp. cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. nutmeg  
2 eggs

### Directions:

Mash potatoes. Add other ingredients. Mix well and put in 2 qt. casserole dish. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes.

### Ingredients:

#### Topping:

3/4 cup corn flakes crumbs  
1/2 cup chopped nuts  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
3/4 stick margarine

### Directions:

Mix all ingredients together and spread over potatoes. Bake for another 10 minutes.

## FRENCH SILK CHOCOLATE PIE

– Mary Lou Fewell

### Ingredients:

1 cup butter (softened)  
1 ½ cup sugar  
4 squares (1 oz. each) Bakers unsweetened

chocolate (melted)  
2 tsp. vanilla  
4 eggs  
1 9-inch cooked pie shell (cooled)

### Directions:

Beat butter and sugar together well. Add one egg at a time and beat 5 minutes for each egg with mixer. Add cooled melted chocolate and vanilla. Mix well. Turn mixture into pie shell then chill in refrigerator for 8 hours. \*Garnishing with whip cream and nuts on top of pie is optional.

## CRANBERRY SAUCE

– Mary Heiden

### Ingredients:

1 cup chopped cranberries  
1 cup chopped apples  
1 cup sugar

### Directions:

Chop cranberries and apples in the blender. Mix together with sugar. It is best when made one day ahead of dinner so it has a chance to sit and get all the flavors mixed.

## DUMP CAKE

– Mary Heiden

### Ingredients:

2 cans cherry pie filling (can use blueberry if preferred)  
1 can drained, crushed pineapple  
1 box cake mix – white or yellow  
3/4 cup flaked coconut  
1 cup chopped walnuts  
1 ¼ sticks margarine

### Directions:

Spray a 9x13 pan with Pam. Spread pie filling in the pan. Spread the drained pineapple next. Sprinkle cake mix next. Thinly slice the margarine and place on top of cake mix. Layer the coconut and nuts. DO NOT STIR!! Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes.

## ROCKY ROAD CANDY

– Mary Haiden

### Ingredients:

2 ½ pounds Hershey milk chocolate bars (can substitute chocolate chips or even almond bark)







2 oz. unsalted peanuts  
4 oz. shredded coconut  
16 oz. large or small  
marshmallows

**Directions:**

Melt chocolate in double boiler. When completely melted, add the peanuts, coconut, and marshmallows. Mix well until coated. Pour on wax paper to cool. Cut or break into pieces and store in covered container. You can also melt the chocolate in the microwave. Use half-power and watch carefully so that it doesn't scorch. Microwave in small intervals to prevent scorching.

## FESTIVE DIP

– Mary Heiden

**Ingredients:**

2 8 oz pkgs. cream cheese (softened)  
1/4 cup chopped green olives with pimento  
2-3 tbsp. chopped onion (a dash or two of onion powder works too)  
2 tbsp. olive juice

**Directions:**

Combine all ingredients together and mix well. Put into a small serving dish and chill. Garnish with parsley if desired. Serve with crackers (Triscuits or Wheat Thins are delicious with this) or potato chips. It especially looks 'Festive' at Christmas time with the green of the olive and the red of the pimento.

## WHITE TRASH

– Mary Heiden

The clue to this mix is sweet, salty, and spicy.

**Ingredients:**

1 pkg. vanilla baking morsels  
Peanuts, cashews, or honey roasted nuts (any amount)  
Cheerios, Fruit Loops, or Cocoa Puffs (any amount)  
Plain M&Ms (any amount)  
Plain and/or flavored Goldfish crackers (any amount)  
Pretzels either sticks or little braids (any amount)

**Directions:**

Mix nuts, cereal, M&Ms, crackers, and pretzels. Melt vanilla baking morsels and pour over the mixture. When thoroughly mixed, spread on wax paper and let cool. When cool, break apart and put in a covered container. It is best to not do a large batch at one time. It is easier to do smaller batches.

## MAGIC COOKIE BARS

– Mary Heiden

**Ingredients:**

2 cups graham cracker crumbs  
1/2 cup margarine or butter  
4 tbsp. granulated sugar  
1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk  
1 1/4 cups raspberry jam/preserves  
1 1/3 cups flaked coconut  
1 cup chopped nuts

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees (325 degrees for glass dish.) Mix melted butter, sugar, and crumbs together. Press firmly into a 13x9 baking pan. Pour sweetened condensed milk evenly over crumbs. Chill for 10 minutes. (This is very important – 10 minutes – no less.) Layer on raspberry jam/preserves. Top with remaining ingredients and bake 15 – 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool. Chill if desired. Cut into bars and serve.

## TINY TEATIME JAM COOKIES

– Mary Heiden

**Ingredients:**

1 cup margarine  
1/2 cup powdered sugar  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 egg yolk  
2 1/2 cups flour  
1/8 tsp. salt  
1/2 cup finely chopped nuts  
1/2 cup raspberry jam

**Directions:**

Cream margarine and sugars. Add sugars, vanilla, and egg yolk together. Beat until light and fluffy. Add flour and salt. Mix well. Divide dough in half. Place one half in refrigerator. Make 1-inch balls with the other half and roll them in nuts.

Roll chilled dough to 1/8 thickness. Cut with a scalloped cookie cutter. Place on greased cookie sheet. Add 1/2 teaspoon jam to center of each

cookie. Put a nut covered ball of dough on top of jam. Make a small indentation in center of each ball and fill with a dab of jam. Bake at 350 degrees for about 10 minutes or until straw colored. Let cool slightly before removing from pan.

"These were always a favorite cookie at holiday time, and I can still remember mom and grandma going through all the time and trouble to make these for me. They are delicate and delicious."

## EASY FUDGE

– Mary Heiden

**Ingredients:**

1 cup peanut butter (plain or crunchy)  
1 large package either butterscotch or chocolate chips

**Directions:**

Melt together in a double boiler (or melt in microwave) until thoroughly melted. Pour into a pan or dish or onto a cookie sheet in a really thin layer. Let cool and harden and then cut into pieces or break into chunks. Keep refrigerated.

## CRANBERRY DREAM SALAD

– Carole Jaroch

**Ingredients:**

3 cups fresh cranberries  
1 large apple  
2 1/2 cups crushed pineapple  
3/4 cups sugar

1/8 tsp. salt  
2 cups miniature marshmallows  
Chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)  
2 cups whipped topping  
1/2 cup sour cream

**Directions:**

Coarsely grind cranberries and apple. Add drained pineapple, sugar, salt, and marshmallows. Cover. Chill overnight. Just before serving, mix whipped topping and sour cream. Fold into salad. Add nuts, if you want them. Freezes well.

"This recipe comes from a 1970 Lutheran Brotherhood book I received as a bridal shower gift. There are many good recipes in it that I have used. Enjoy!"

## RECIPE FOR A HAPPY DAY

– Mary Heiden

**Ingredients:**

1 cup friendly words  
2 heaping cups understanding  
4 heaping teaspoons time and patience  
Pinch of warm personality  
Dash of humor

**Directions:**

Measure words carefully. Add heaping cup of understanding. Use generous amounts of time and patience. Cook with gas on front burner. Keep temperature low – DO NOT BOIL! Add a dash of humor and pinch of warm personality. Season to taste with spice of life. Serve in individual molds.





RECIPES, from page 19

## MOMMA D'S FOUR CHEESE MAC & CHEESE WITH BACON

— Paulette Davis

### Ingredients:

1 pound box cavatappi pasta  
1 pound package bacon  
1 tbsp. unsalted butter  
3 tbsp. all-purpose flour  
2 1/2 cups 2% milk  
1/2 tsp. onion flakes  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. pepper  
1/2 pound sharp cheddar cheese, shredded  
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese  
1 cup blue or gorgonzola cheese (or 1/2 each)  
8 slices American cheese

### Directions:

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 3-quart broiler safe baking dish with butter or nonstick spray. Cook cavatappi in boiling water. Meanwhile, cook bacon until crispy. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Pour off drippings, returning 2 tbsp. to pan. Add butter. Whisk in flour until smooth. Whisk steady stream of milk. Stir in onion flakes, salt, and pepper. Bring to boil over medium/high heat and then reduce heat and simmer two minutes more.

In separate large bowl, toss cheddar, mozzarella, and blue/gorgonzola cheeses. Remove milk mixture from heat and

whisk American cheese and 1 and 1/4 cups cheese mix. Toss chopped bacon with remaining cheese mix. Combine pasta and cheese sauce. Pour 1/2 into prepared dish. Sprinkle with generous cup bacon/cheese mix. Repeat layers. Bake at 350 for 20-25 minutes. Increase oven to broil and broil until top is lightly browned. Makes 10 Cups (12 servings).

"This recipe is easy to double, bake, and freeze in portions or ahead of event. Ingredients can be modified to your taste!"

## CRANBERRY RELISH

— Joann Rauh

### Ingredients:

2 cups cranberries  
1 large orange  
1 large apple  
3/4 cup sugar



### Directions:

Place fruit in food processor or chop very fine. Add sugar and mix well. Refrigerate. Freezes well.

## BAKED CORN

— Eileen Henry

### Ingredients:

1 can cream style corn  
1 can whole kernel corn, drained (or one bag frozen whole kernel corn)  
8 oz. sour cream  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
1/3 cup sugar  
2 beaten eggs  
1 small box Jiffy corn muffin mix

### Directions:

Mix together and bake in greased 9x13 pan at 350 degrees for one hour or until center is done.

## OLD FASHIONED GINGER SNAPS

— Amy Swygart

### Ingredients:

2 cups flour  
2 tsp. baking soda  
2 tsp. ground ginger  
1 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. nutmeg  
1/2 tsp. ground allspice  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted and cooled  
1/4 cup unsulfured dark molasses (not blackstrap)  
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
1/3 cup granulated sugar  
1 large egg, beaten  
1/2 cup coarse sugar, such as turbinado

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, ground ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and salt.

In a large bowl, whisk together melted butter, molasses, brown sugar, granulated sugar, and egg. Add flour mixture and stir to combine. Cover and chill for one hour.

Place turbinado sugar in a small bowl. Roll a tablespoon of chilled dough into a 1-inch ball.

Roll cookie dough balls into the turbinado sugar to coat evenly. Space cookie dough balls onto a baking sheet about two inches apart.

Bake for 10-12 minutes or until edges are crisp and centers are still chewy. Makes about 40 cookies.

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— Mary Heiden

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Grace,  
But most of all with Thy love.*

*As we partake of this food,  
The table Thou hast spread.  
We want to thank thee Lord,  
For this our daily bread.*

*Warm this meal with Thy  
love,  
And light it with Thy peace,  
Forgive me if I scurried and  
fretted,  
Please make my grumbling  
cease.*

*Bless our kitchen Lord, our  
home and then  
Bless those who enter within.  
May they find only peace and  
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And happiness therein.*

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# Made in Bethlehem: Supporting Palestinian Christians in Troubled Times

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

No place on earth is more closely linked to Christmas than the little town of Bethlehem. In view of the ongoing war between Hamas and Israel – the images of which have filled our media for weeks – Bethlehem residents are living amid fear and uncertainty.

Because tourism is the primary industry source of income, anything that keeps pilgrims away from the Holy Land jeopardizes the livelihood of those living in Bethlehem, not to mention the scarcity of food and other resources, and the terrorism that threatens all residents of the West Bank.

While the Christian community in the Holy Land was once thriving, now, only 2 percent of those who remain in the land where Jesus lived and died are Christian. Their friends and relatives who have emigrated to North America are doing what they can to help the Christians who remain. Marketing olive wood items handcrafted in Palestine is one way they fulfill this mission.

Although Alfred and Grace Salsa are now American citizens living in Michigan, they grew up in Bethlehem, where Alfred worked for an American company. In 2002, Nativity Artifacts Inc., an organization that sells olive wood carvings, invited Alfred to move to the United States as a way to help

his homeland. The bishop of Jerusalem encouraged him to make this move as a way of supporting the Christian minority remaining in the Holy Land. Salsa views his work as a ministry, not a business. Besides setting up displays of handmade olive wood products in churches, he arranges pilgrimages to the Holy Land for groups from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and others.

Salsa will display handmade olive wood items such as crosses, nativity sets, rosaries, and depictions of the Last Supper and the Holy Family. Eighty-five percent of the proceeds from the sales of these items go directly to the craftsmen in Bethlehem, enabling them to feed their families and remain in their traditional homeland.

On the weekend of November 4-5 the Salsas sold their products at Our Lady of Good Hope in Fort Wayne. The following weekend, November 11-12, they set up their shop at Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw.

From now until Christmas, there are three more dates that they will be selling their olive wood sculptures in the diocese: November 25-26 at St. Pius X in Granger.

December 2-3 at St. Vincent de Paul in Fort Wayne.

December 9-10 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Fort Wayne.

Salsa is in daily contact with his family in Bethlehem. All



Photos by Scott Warden

**A Nativity scene carved from the branch of an olive tree is displayed at Our Lady of Good Hope Church in Fort Wayne.**

have survived the attacks so far, he told Today's Catholic, but they are experiencing shortages of basic food items such as flour and rice, and entry points into their territory are sealed off.

"All we can do is pray," Salsa said. "At this point, we don't know what the future holds, and we can't see a peaceful resolution. Please join us in praying especially for Christians in the Holy Land. We are so sad as we watch innocent people dying on both sides. Politicians around the world need to step up and do what they can to stop the killing!"

Joseph Shomali, based in Montreal, was also born near Bethlehem. He descended from the shepherds who were the first to learn of the Messiah's birth. One of his brothers, William Shomali,

higher education was unavailable to Palestinians in Israel, Joseph began studying chemical engineering in Baghdad and completed his education in Canada, where he worked in that field. However, during a 1991 visit to his family in Bethlehem, they begged for his help in promoting their handcrafted items.

"In our culture," Shomali said, "when someone asks for your help, you don't say no. You say, 'We will try.'" For the next four years, he ran a shoestring operation out of his basement. As it expanded, he decided he needed to resign from his engineering career and devote himself fulltime to that business. "When the Lord gives you a mission and you accept your vocation, you will be blessed," he said.

The business evolved in response to customer demand on the one hand and developments in the Catholic Church on the other. Although the olive wood still comes from the Holy Land, Canadian materials like metal to form the corpus on the crucifix had to be added. Quality was important to Shomali. When he talked with bookstore owners, they were reluctant to stock his products because of their experience with Israeli companies that charged high prices for shoddy items. It didn't take them long to appreciate his lower prices and superior quality – and the fact that about 50 percent of the price goes back to the craftsmen in Palestine.



**Grace and Alfred Salsa, who grew up in Bethlehem, pose for a photo on Sunday, November 5, while selling olive wood sculptures at Our Lady of Good Hope Church in Fort Wayne.**

is an auxiliary bishop in the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which has responsibility for Christians in Gaza. Because

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EWTN was also instrumental in making Shomali's offerings known.

"There is a big difference between people living in faith and those concerned about their bottom line," Shomali said.

Because of television and online marketing, Shomali was able to thrive during the COVID-19 pandemic. Craftsmen working with their own families in the Holy Land didn't have to cease production in times of lockdown.

Shomali and his wife are a knight and lady of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, charged by the Vatican to support the Church of Jerusalem, which also has jurisdiction over Gaza. This involves substantial funds for humanitarian purposes, more urgent now than ever.

Because they are such active members of the Catholic Church, the items Shomali markets reflect the Church's priorities and celebrations,

such as the Year of Mercy in 2016 and more recent saints and blesseds, such as Carlo Acutis, the Italian teenager who was beatified in 2020 and is one of the patron saints of the National Eucharistic Revival. Shomali and the craftsmen whose items he is selling are now gearing up for the 2025 Jubilee Year.

Until recently, another source of handcrafted items from Bethlehem is a workshop affiliated with l'Arche. Its name, Ma'an Lil Hayat, means "Together for Life." It is a place where people with and without intellectual disabilities have shared daily life and engaged in creative textile art using wool purchased from the shepherdeses around Bethlehem. From this material they fashion one-of-a-kind felt ornaments, Christmas trees, nativity scenes, and other items you can view on their website, [larchebethlehem.org](http://larchebethlehem.org). The l'Arche philosophy capitalizes on people's gifts rather than their limitations and forms

communities where people of differing abilities share life and decision-making.

The work of Ma'an Lil Hayat has ground to a halt since the eruption of the conflict in Gaza. Bethlehem has been cut off even from other communities in the West Bank, and its streets are empty; parents are afraid to let their children with special needs venture out. The bus driver who brought them to the workshop lives in another town, which he is not permitted to leave. It is unlikely that the group will be able to fill orders this Christmas.

If you are unable to visit one of the diocesan churches displaying Nativity Artifacts, you can contact Alfred Salsa at [alfredsalsa@yahoo.com](mailto:alfredsalsa@yahoo.com). Shomali Inc. products are available via EWTN, at bookstores, including Good Shepherd Books and Gifts in Fort Wayne, or from Joseph Shomali, who can be contacted by emailing him at [jshomali@bellnet.ca](mailto:jshomali@bellnet.ca).

**Cupertino Classic**

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6:30 p.m.

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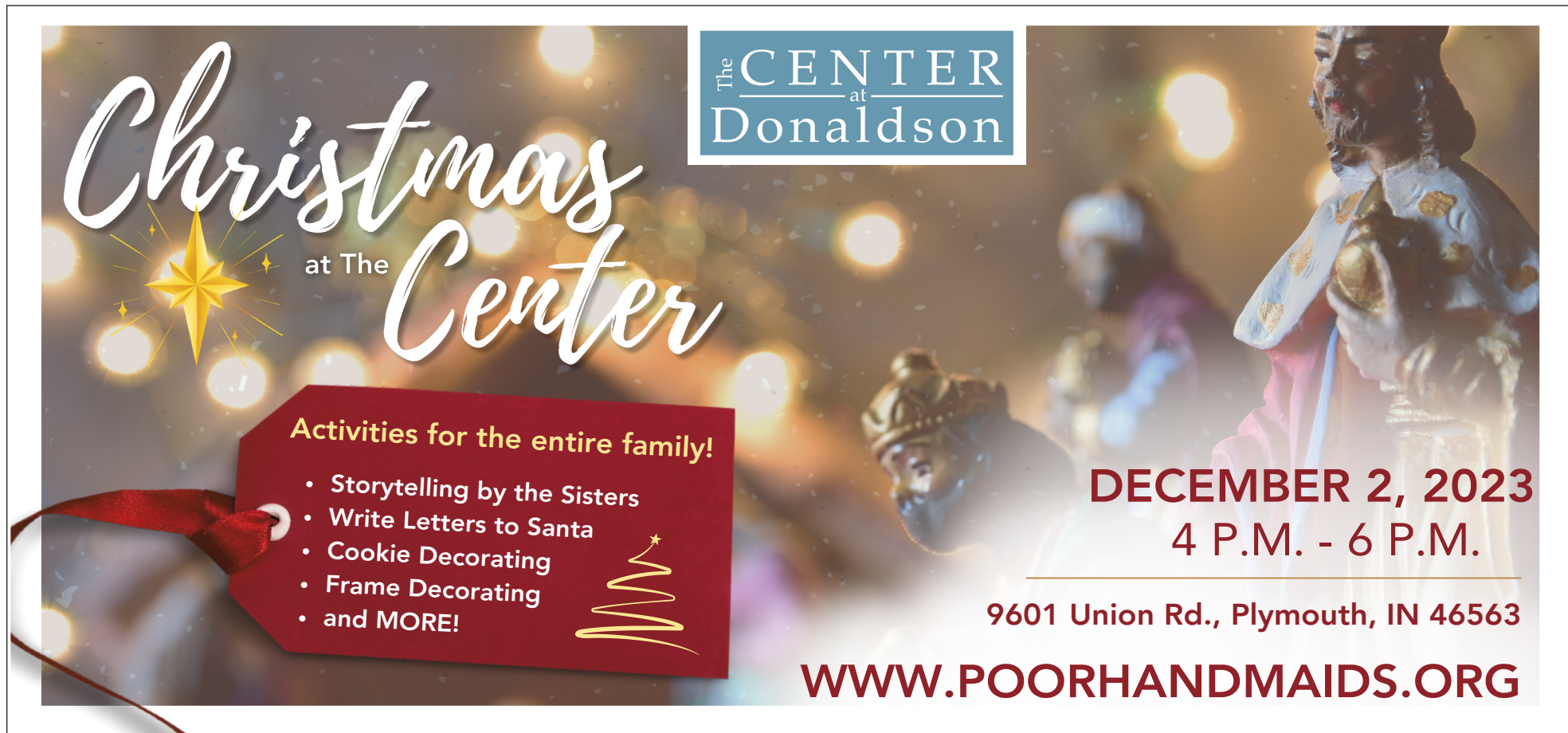




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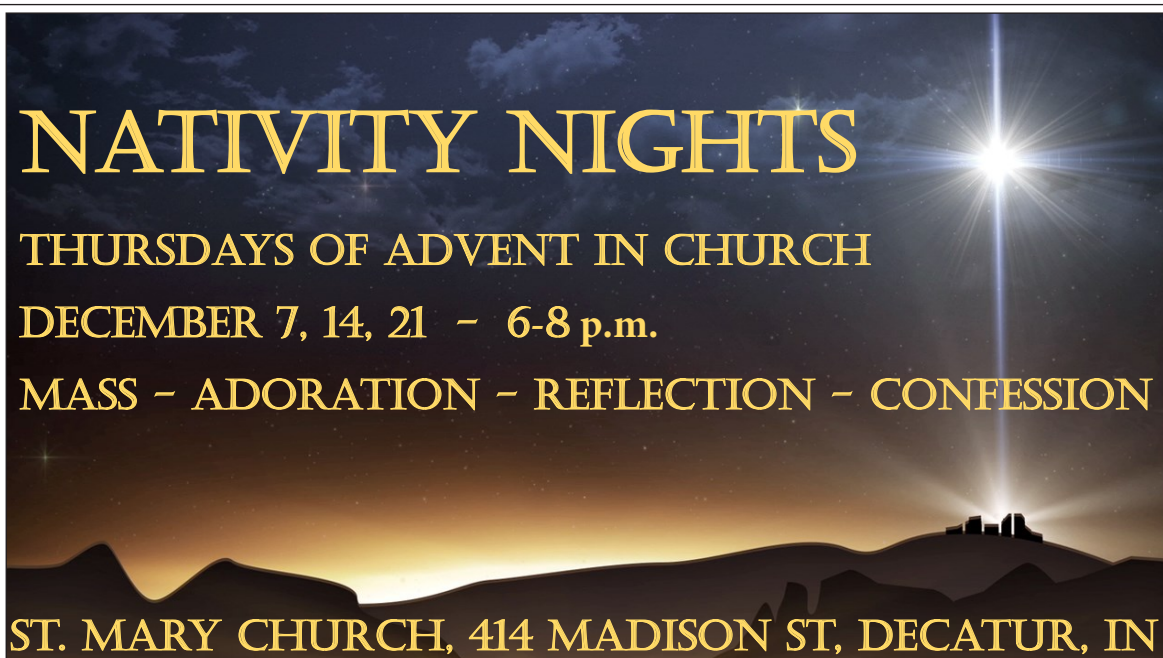
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Stories Within Stories by Jim Shore (United States). Image courtesy of The Marian Library (Dayton, Ohio); used with permission.



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# Priests, Seminarians Set for Ninth Cupertino Classic

BY ERIC PEAT

One night every year, our diocesan clergy and seminarians exchange cassocks for athletic socks, set aside their stoles to make steals, and hang up their chasubles to chase loose balls.

Clerical collars? More like clerical ballers.

The ninth chapter of the Cupertino Classic will unfold on Wednesday, December 27, at Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne. The annual basketball game pitting our diocesan priests against seminarians is named after St. Joseph of Cupertino, a 17th-century Franciscan friar who was known to levitate during prayer. Seminarian Noah Isch, who helped organize this year's event along with fellow seminarian John Hickey, said the night is about shining a light on religious vocations in a fun, faith-filled environment.

"The mission of the night is an opportunity to gather together as a diocese for a night of family fun," said Isch, a second-year theology student at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland. "It is also geared toward spreading vocations awareness. It is an opportunity for young women to encounter religious sisters and young men to encounter priests and seminarians. It is an opportunity for people still discerning their vocations to ask questions. It is also to encourage people of all ages to support vocational discernment in their own parishes."

The evening will begin with Mass in the chapel at Bishop Dwenger at 3:45 p.m., followed by Eucharistic adoration until 6 p.m. That's when both teams will take the court for a 6:30 p.m. tipoff. While the event is free and open to the public, there will be an opportunity for attendees to give a freewill donation to the seminarian education fund, as well as to purchase concessions and event T-shirts. In addition, religious sisters and seminarians will both have booths before and during the game to answer any questions about vocations and discernment.

Supremacy in the series will be on the line this year, as each squad holds four wins against the other through their first eight contests. The seminarians have triumphed in four of the last five meetings, including last year's 46-35 victory at Saint Joseph High School in South Bend. However, the tide may be turning this year, as the diocesan ordinations to the priesthood in June have bolstered the roster for the priests and depleted that of the seminarians.



Joshua Schipper

**In the annual basketball game between priests and seminarians of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, it was the seminarians who won last year's Cupertino Classic, which is named after St. Joseph of Cupertino, a 17th-century Franciscan friar who was known to levitate during prayer. This year's game will be held at Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne on Wednesday, December 27, at 6:30 p.m.**

"The amount of talent coming is sort of unjust," admitted Father Terry Coonan, Pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Fort Wayne, who has played for the priests in every Cupertino Classic since its inception in 2014. "But looking from the perspective of the priest team, as everyone says at Mass, 'It is right and just.'" Father Coonan said the team acquisitions give some of the more seasoned members of the priest squad an opportunity to either hang up the sneakers or not carry so much of the burden. "I like to think of myself as a 20-something," said Father Coonan, "but the reality is, I'm getting close to closing my fourth decade of life."

Returning for the priest squad alongside Father Coonan are Father Dan Niezer, who Father Coonan tabbed as a versatile player with the ability to play in the post or handle the ball, and Father Ben Landrigan, whose quickness and ability

to score in the paint or hit the occasional jump shot will come in handy, said Father Coonan. Also returning is fan favorite Father Drew Curry, a veteran who likes to launch from long range. "Deep three-pointers do not intimidate him," noted Father Coonan. The priests also welcome newcomers Father Jake Schneider and Father Brian Florin to the fold – the latter of whom Father Coonan called "a good scorer and hard to guard" due to his agility and athleticism. Other potential team members include Father Ryan Timossi and Father Paolo Degasperi, both of whom Father Coonan noted are very good soccer players, which usually translates well on to the basketball court.

The top priority for the priests this year once again is to slow down Seminarian Greenan Sullivan, a former standout at Saint Joseph High School before playing collegiately at Ave Maria University in Florida.

Sullivan, a second-year theology student at Mount St. Mary's, led the seminarians to victory in last year's matchup with a game-high 21 points and 11 rebounds. "If we can stop him from scoring as many points as he has in years past, we'll probably be in good shape to win," said Father Coonan. "For us, it's about not turning the ball over or getting too excited trying to do something silly."

On the other side of the court, the seminarian squad only returns two players from last year's roster and will lean heavily on the experience of Sullivan.

"Our established leader and MVP continues to be Greenan Sullivan," said Seminarian Andy Barnes, who is playing in his fourth Cupertino Classic and is the only other player returning from last year's team. "He is a good shooter but an even stronger ball-handler and finisher at the rim. One of his strengths that benefits the team

the most is his basketball IQ. He knows where to put each of us on the court to succeed."

Sullivan and Barnes will be joined by Seminarian Sam Martinez and Deacon Caleb Kruse, both newcomers to the Cupertino Classic. Barnes said he hopes Martinez's background as a hockey goalie will bring "a different level of athleticism and physicality" to the team, while Kruse's build as a runner can "aid us in playing up-tempo to keep the priests off-balance." Also on board are first-year seminarians Paul Cline and Thomas Bundy, who Barnes referred to as wild cards, since "their basketball skills are untapped and unknown to the diocese." Rounding out the seminarian squad is Mason Bailey, who Barnes said was "extremely hesitant to be on the team, but we hope this is from humility and a desire not to embarrass the priests with his extreme basketball skills."

Because of their roster turnover and relative inexperience, Barnes said his team will have to play a nearly perfect game to beat the priests this year.

"Everyone expects the priests to come out and take care of business early," Barnes said. "We are going to need to finish with efficiency in the paint and shoot at a high percentage when we get open looks. On the defensive end, we will need to maintain a high intensity throughout the entirety of the game, minimizing high-percentage shots from the priests."

Regardless of the result on the scoreboard, both sides are excited to take part in this unique tradition, which has become a highly anticipated event every year by diocesan clergy and laity alike.

"It is a very fun environment to be a part of," Father Coonan said. "That's kind of the reason that this thing works so well – in that fun environment, we can use that enthusiasm and excitement to point to the fact that the life of the priest is a life that is full of joy. We as priests can still partake in some of the good, clean fun of life. So, I really love that. It was an important thing of my own discernment: normalizing the priest, seeing that their life is more relatable."

"The People of God are so good and so faithful," Barnes said. "Whenever we come home from the seminary, they constantly remind us of their prayers and support for us. This game is such a tangible, visible reminder of this reality. Seeing the stands packed with people from all sides of the diocese is not only a beautiful image of the unity of our Church under the headship of Jesus Christ, but also shows the great love and joy that is present in our diocese."



# Volunteers Needed for Catholic Charities' Christmas Program

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH

Throughout the year, Catholic Charities of Fort Wayne-South Bend provides mental health counseling, help for families, and assistance to refugees in the diocese. But as we approach the holidays, those who make up the charitable organization tackle a seasonal project: providing Christmas gifts to children 200 percent or more below the poverty level. They call it, simply, the Christmas Program.

And they need help to execute this vital mission.

"Catholic Charities seeks individuals, families, businesses, and organizations with giving hearts to help make Christmas a little brighter for children in need," said Isabella Witulski, Christmas Program Coordinator in Catholic

Charities' East Region (Fort Wayne area) office.

Witulski told Today's Catholic how volunteers can help the community through the Christmas Program. Children signed up for the program provide Catholic Charities with their Christmas wish lists. The role of a sponsor (whether an individual, business, or group) is to shop for gifts for that child or donate money to have the staff at Catholic Charities buy the gifts. Organizations can also set up giving trees to make sure all children signed up for the program receive Christmas gifts.

Every region of the Christmas Program has different needs. For instance, Witulski said the locations in Fort Wayne and Auburn need more sponsors to provide gifts for children. And while all children have been matched with



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sponsors in South Bend's West Region location, staff there still desperately need other forms of help.

Hannah Finley, Coordinator of Volunteer Experience at the organization's West Region office, has worked for Catholic Charities as a refugee case manager. This is her first holiday season coordinating the Christmas volunteering, and it's a record-breaking one for her office, with the number of children enrolled in the Christmas Program more than doubled, from 53 children last year to 130 this year. For an organization whose resources were already stretched thin, there is

concern about the number of gifts that will be coming in.

"The gifts would flood up the hallway," Finley said of past Christmases. "Our office is not suitable for 130 children's worth of gifts."

Finley's main concern is handling the generosity of the sponsors – finding volunteers to sort and distribute gifts to make the gift pick-up weekend go as smoothly as possible.

Finley notes that the influx of participants in the Christmas program this year comes partly from the program's relaxing of some previous parameters. For instance, the age cutoff for children who can participate rose this year from age 14 years to 18 years, and families are no longer required to already be participating in Catholic Charities programs before signing up for the Christmas

Program. "Anyone, whether they've heard of Catholic Charities before or are just hearing about this program, can sign up," Finley said.

Finley thinks the program's growth is due to more than just parameter changes. "Truthfully, we get so many more kids just because of the need in our community and how quickly the word spreads," Finley said.

To see how you, your business, or organization can help with this year's Catholic Charities Christmas Program, contact the following leaders:

East Region (Adams, Allen, Huntington, Wabash, Wells, and Whitley counties): Isabella Witulski, [iwitulski@ccfwsb.org](mailto:iwitulski@ccfwsb.org)

North Region (DeKalb County): Jennifer Alvarez, [nrvol@ccfwsb.org](mailto:nrvol@ccfwsb.org)

West Region (Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joseph counties): Hannah Finley, [hfinley@ccfwsb.org](mailto:hfinley@ccfwsb.org)

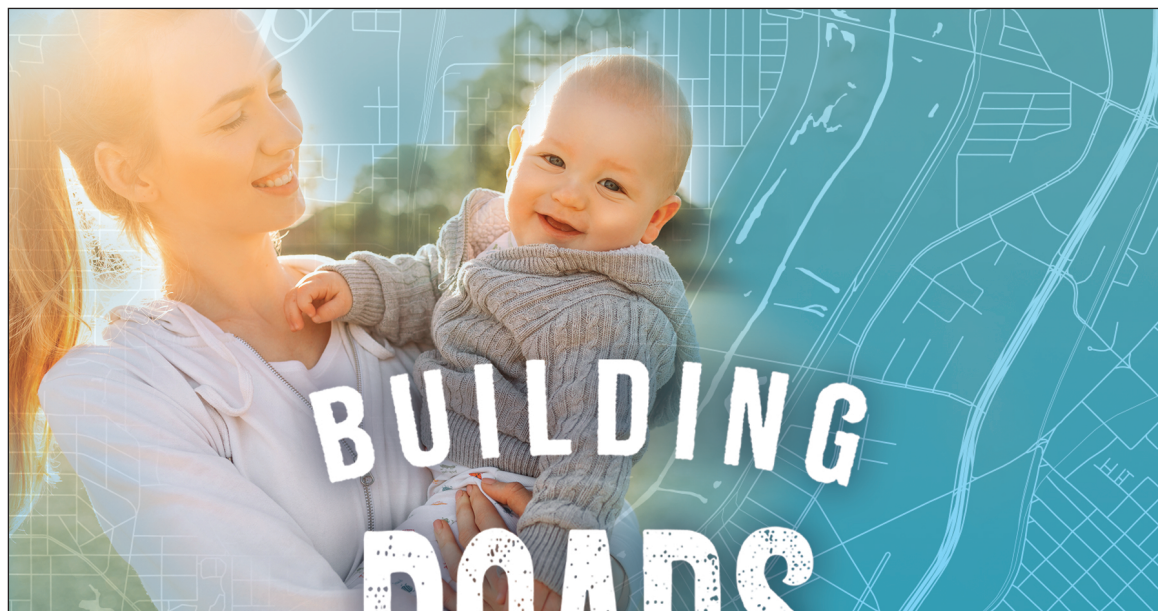


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# Destroying Father Rupnik's Art, Restoring Trust, Living the Gospel

Last December, when news started to come to light about the "very highly credible" accusations of abuses committed by former Jesuit Father Marko Rupnik, I cautioned against removing his art.

In the face of the outrage I saw, I advocated for a more measured response. We didn't yet know the extent of the facts and allegations surrounding Father Rupnik.

Back then, I'd tried to articulate some principles to preserve his art. I really was trying to be patient, impartial, and just. And I was wrong.

Knowing now the scale of Father Rupnik's abuse – and his appetite for holding power over vulnerable people – my former position is nothing short of untenable.

It is particularly appalling to learn that some abuses actually occurred while Rupnik was creating his art. Imagine praying or contemplating before an image that was created in the midst of known evil acts. That's a foundational reason why Father Rupnik's art must be treated differently than the works of other Catholic artists who have committed even grievous sins.

Symbols matter, as plenty of good Catholic friends have patiently argued that fact with

me. "How can his artwork be seen as anything other than symbolic of the rot and moral decay that has poisoned the Church these last decades?" my friends have insisted. I struggled to accept this, telling myself that most Catholics won't know who Father Rupnik is. But it's important that they be told, and even more important that when they are, they see the Church responding properly, with justice for his victims and action meant to heal all of us.

Father Rupnik's art must go. No longer can it be used for our sacred spaces. It can't appear intact in books or in our media. Dioceses and Catholic ministries mustn't use it to illustrate retreats or events. Most urgently, it must be stripped from our consecrated places. And to that end, there are two points I want to double down on.

First, like sound waves, or a pebble thrown into a pond, evil has resonances. Rupnik's art, tainted by sin, carries the memory of abuse and human disregard. Removing the art will never be good enough. It can't merely be forgotten.

It can't be removed under the cover of darkness or hidden behind drop cloths. That's what I fear the most: quiet renovations where nothing



## GUEST COMMENTARY

FATHER PATRICK BRISCOE

is said. This would be far too much like quietly incardinating Rupnik in Slovenia while he continues his life as if nothing has happened – exactly the miserable practice that has created and hidden hundreds of thousands of victims all around the world. The removal needs to be public, with pictures of the demolitions and deconstructions posted and explained. There should be events and conversations to explain the situation. There should be books written about it and documentaries produced, all of them explaining that when sin permeates artwork, that work has no place in the Church.

And we should pray. Oh, how we need to pray!

Second, I hope that there could be redemption. I hope Father Rupnik's eternal salvation is not lost. But that requires repentance and a life

BRISCOE, page 29

# Truth and Charity: The Mission of Today's Catholic

From the fall of 2005 through the early spring of 2006, I was in the process of putting my pagan ways behind me as I prepared to come into full communion with the Church. Once a week, my fellow candidates and I would gather in the community center at St. John the Baptist Parish in New Haven, where Father Paul McCarthy and the director of religious education would school us on the teachings of the Church.

Much of it was new to me, but some of it was familiar. But I was completely stumped when we were told that we each needed to pick a confirmation saint. I didn't know Aquinas from Augustine. I was a sportswriter and editor. The only saints I knew played on Sundays and wore the fleur-de-lis on their helmets. While Father McCarthy certainly imparted to us why careful – and prayerful – discernment was needed, I didn't take the process seriously. I procrastinated until the day we had to declare which saint we had chosen. Minutes after Googling "who is the patron saint of writers?" I jotted down St. Francis de Sales without giving it another thought.



## EDITOR COMMENTARY

SCOTT WARDEN

I might have been clueless, but God, as He always does, has a plan.

It took a decade for me to truly get to know St. Francis, but the more I learned about him, and the more I read his incredible writing, I knew I had found not only a lifelong friend but a mentor and guide in my profession. Recently, I've been reading a compilation of his writing, and the following passage struck me. He wrote: "Take it as a certain sign that your charity is not genuine if your words, no matter how true, are not charitable."

Those words stung as I read them. They forced me to ask myself: How often do I think I'm being charitable by professing the truth about something when, in reality, I'm using it as a hammer to bash someone

WARDEN, page 29

# Through Christ, We Draw Strength to Sustain Our Faith



## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

## 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Book of Proverbs provides this weekend's first reading. This book was composed when both the Holy Land and the lives of its inhabitants, God's Chosen People, had experienced massive changes as a result of the military conquest of the Holy Land – and indeed much of the Eastern Mediterranean world – by Alexander the Great (356-323 BC), the young Greek king from Macedonia.

Alexander did not live long enough to enjoy fully the successes of his victorious armies, but his conquests placed Greeks, and Greek philosophy, at the summit of cultures across

the Middle East.

This Greek influence most often brought ideas that were contrary to traditional Hebrew theology. Committed Jews had to struggle to keep their theology alive, and they especially struggled to relay their tradition to oncoming generations.

Proverbs was written as a part of this effort. Along with other books of the Hebrew Scriptures, Proverbs attempted to blend human logic with Hebrew theology to say that ancient Hebrew beliefs are not illogical. (In the Greek mind, human logic was supreme.)

The reading from Proverbs proclaimed by the Church on this weekend obliquely refers to the fact that marriages under the Greek arrangement usually were contrived. Quite disturbing for Jews was the fact that wives were not much better than servants, even slaves. The concept of love, freely and gladly exchanged between spouses, was not expected by any means in Greek life. Proverbs basically tried to elevate the Jewish notion of human dignity, a dignity including women as well as men.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians supplies the second reading. In the early days of the Church, the general presumption was that momentarily, very soon, Jesus would return to earth to vanquish the evil and vindicate the good. Paul had to remind the Christians of Thessalonica that following the Gospel might be a long, tiring, and difficult process, as Christ might not appear as quickly as they would like.

For its third and last reading, the Church presents St. Matthew's Gospel. The story in essence also appears in the Gospel of Mark.

The story builds on the same theme as that given in First Thessalonians. The present order will end one day. Every human will die. No one can predict exactly when natural death will come.

Life suddenly and unexpectedly can produce the unexpected and unwanted, as Americans realized on November 22, 1963, when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, or more recently when hurricanes devastated so many places.

The reading from Matthew counsels Christians to remember the uncertainty of life, as well as the perceptions and hope given them in their faith.

The ancient Jews, for whom Proverbs was written, and the first Christians, for whom First Thessalonians and Matthew's Gospel were written, drew great strength and confidence from their faith. It sustained them in many ordeals.

## Reflection

When President Kennedy was murdered, Americans, and especially American Catholics, were paralyzed with grief. Time stood still, but his campaign for the presidency affected American Catholic life more.

Kennedy knew that his major political problem was his Catholic religion. Anti-Catholicism was alive and well in the United States.

He turned his religion into an advantage, speaking of American Catholic patriots, and of ordinary Catholic citizens, who loved, served, and bettered the nation.

Hearing him, Catholics in the United States felt a pride in their Church. This pride gave them security. Fewer hid their religion anymore. Many openly defended the moral positions of the Church.

For those who thought about it, they realized that their Church spoke the words of Jesus. In Jesus, the faithful learn how to live, learn what matters in life, and learn why life is worth living, as did the ancients so long ago.

## READINGS

**Sunday:** Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31; Psalms 128:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; Matthew 25:14-30

**Monday:** 1 Maccabees 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63; Psalms 119:53, 61, 150, 155, 158; Luke 18:35-43

**Tuesday:** 2 Maccabees 6:18-31; Psalms 3:2-7; Luke 19:1-10

**Wednesday:** 2 Maccabees 7:1, 20-31; Psalms 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15; Luke 19:11-28

**Thursday:** 1 Maccabees 2:15-29; Psalms 50:1-2, 5-6, 14-15; Luke 19:41-44

**Friday:** 1 Maccabees 4:36-37, 52-59; 1 Chronicles 29:10-12; Luke 19:45-48

**Saturday:** 1 Maccabees 6:1-13; Psalms 9:2-4, 6, 16, 19; Luke 20:27-40



# Matthew Perry Reminds Us to Pray, Even for the Famous

**“G**od, please help me.” Matthew Perry whispered. “Show me that you are here. God, please help me.” In his memoir, the late actor described an encounter where he unmistakably knew God’s presence. He had been struggling with addiction. He even thought he was dying. But the peace that he received when he cried out to God “with the desperation of a drowning man” – which was tragically how he died at 54 years old on Saturday, October 28 – was something he would go back to, to stay sober, and to remember the truth of God, the truth of more.

I have no reason to believe Perry was schooled in St. Ignatius of Loyola, but like a good Ignatian student, he would return to that moment to remember the certainty of God. He had gone from hating himself to feeling “safe” and “taken care of.” He wrote, “Decades of struggling with God, and wrestling with life, and sadness, all was being washed away, like a river of pain gone into oblivion.” In years past, he had prayed for fame. For better or for worse, that prayer was answered. But now he had prayed “for the right thing: help.”

He wrote that “everything was different now. I could see color differently, angles were of a different magnitude, the walls were stronger, the ceiling higher, the trees tapping on the windows more perfect than ever, their roots connected via soul to the planet and back into me.” He described “one great connection created by an ever-loving God – and beyond, a sky, which had been before theoretically infinite was now unknow-

ably endless. I was connected to the universe in a way I had never been.” He experienced wonderment. “Even the plants in my house, which I had never even noticed before, seemed in sharp focus, more lovely than it was possible to be, more perfect, more alive.”

Obviously, this isn’t John of the Cross. And his “Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing: A Memoir” used the f-word a fair amount, which I do not remember from “The Dark Night of the Soul.” And yet, our lives are meant to be a journey to union with God. And in his struggles, Perry seemed to have sought this. He told an interviewer, “I would like to be remembered as somebody who lived well, loved well, was a

seeker,” Perry said. “And his paramount thing is that he wants to help people. That’s what I want.”

He continued in a 2022 podcast with Tom Power promoting his book: “The best thing about me, bar none, is that if somebody comes to me and says, ‘I can’t stop drinking, can you help me?’ I can say ‘yes’ and follow up and do it,” Perry said. “When I die, I don’t want ‘Friends’ to be

the first thing that’s mentioned. I want that to be the first thing that’s mentioned. And I’m going to live the rest of my life proving that.” And in the days since his death, people have testified to being helped by Perry. Actor Hank Azaria, who appeared on “Friends,” posted on Instagram about how Perry accompanied him to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. “As a sober person, he was so caring and giving and wise, and he totally helped me get sober.”

As it happens, I’ve always associated Matthew Perry

them. Let us then make something new – something for the victims of clerical sexual abuse that none of us may ever forget. Something for healing. Something for hope.

With his art all over the world, the case of Father Marko Rupnik cries out for constructive action. Perhaps



## TAKING NOTE

KATHRYN JEAN LOPEZ

with heaven. I suspect he’d be pleased to know that. My introduction to the actor was not “Friends” but a somewhat silly, short-lived sitcom, “Second Chance,” where he played a teenager who was visited by his older self. St. Peter had sent him back to put his younger self on the straight and narrow. I went back and watched a half-episode after the news of Perry’s death. It wasn’t high art. But it got me praying. Back then and now.

Perry’s is not the first celebrity death that prompted an examination of conscience for me. When I was a teen, he had me thinking of God. Later, though I was not a religious watcher of “Friends,” he made me laugh on occasion. Did I ever pray for him? I don’t remember. We should never encounter anyone and not pray for them. Even on our screens. Maybe especially on our screens — we live enough of our lives on them, after all.

I’ve known enough public figures in my life to know that it can be a lonely, desperate experience, even if you’re not living the Hollywood life. Pray for the repose of the soul of Matthew Perry and the consolation of his family and friends. And remember that there is not even one of us who could not use a prayer. Desperation creeps into even the lives of those of us who have a more schooled understanding of God. It is because we are sinners that we need a savior. Savor the gifts of God more this hour and day. We’re not guaranteed another. Keep your eyes on heaven. Our second chance is now, in confession and the sacramental life.

Kathryn Jean Lopez is a Senior Fellow at the National Review Institute and Editor-at-Large of National Review.

only such an effort can demonstrate to victims worldwide that the Church seriously has their backs. Restoring trust and living the Gospel demand it.

Father Patrick Briscoe is Editor of Our Sunday Visitor.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for November 19, 2023

Matthew 25:14=30

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A: About the rich man’s servants. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

JOURNEY	ENTRUSTED	TALENTS
AWAY	DUG A HOLE	GROUND
LONG TIME	FIVE MORE	WELL DONE
GOOD	FORWARD	GATHERING
SCATTER	LAZY	INTEREST
TEN	MORE	BE GIVEN
TAKEN	THROW	DARKNESS

## SETTLES

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

WARDEN, from page 28

over the head? This truly is one of my faults – one of my most grievous faults. And judging by the harshness with which our entire society speaks to one another – including our fellow Catholics – I’m not alone.

The quote from St. Francis de Sales reminded me of something Pope Francis wrote earlier this year in his message for World Communications Day – something I’ve thought about often since joining the team at Today’s Catholic. The Holy Father wrote: “We have a pressing need in the Church for communication that kindles hearts, that is balm on wounds, and that shines light on the journey of our brothers and sisters. ... A form of communication founded on humility ... which never separates truth from charity.”

Veritatem in Caritate, Latin for “truth in charity,” is the episcopal motto of Bishop Rhoades. It is also a guiding light for the mission of Today’s Catholic, which seeks to unite the faithful through honest, uplifting journalism that is always written with the mind of the Church.

In a recent interview, Bishop Rhoades explained the importance of Today’s Catholic and its mission, saying: “Today’s Catholic is an instrument for not only evangelization and catechesis, but also building communion, because it’s informing the readership of the life of

the Church in our diocese and building communion among parishes, schools, apostolates, and more. In this way, readers of Today’s Catholic realize that the Church is bigger than their own parish. ... There is also a formation aspect that readers can find in Today’s Catholic, which will help them in their prayer life, their understanding of Church teaching, but also their involvement in the mission of our diocese and the universal Church. Today’s Catholic certainly will help to inform and educate people in their faith and inspire their calling to be missionary disciples.”

This mission is at the heart of each person who works to bring you Today’s Catholic every week. We hope you enjoy this special Thanksgiving issue, which has been sent to the homes of all registered parishioners in the diocese. Please consider joining us in this mission to form and inform readers by sharing Today’s Catholic with friends and loved ones. A one-year subscription is just \$25. To subscribe, or to give the gift of a subscription, visit [TodaysCatholic.org/subscribe](https://TodaysCatholic.org/subscribe).

Together, let us continue to form our Catholic community by speaking – as St. Francis de Sales preached, and as Bishop Rhoades urges – with words that are both true and charitable.

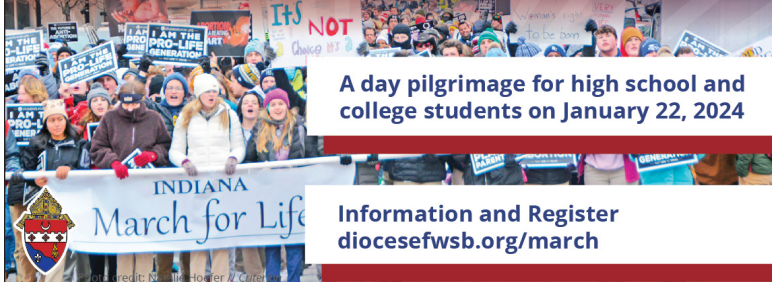
Scott Warden is the Editor-In-Chief of Today’s Catholic.

BRISCOE, from page 28

of penance removed from the public eye. Justice demands public reparations. And something of that Christian hope might be conveyed with what we do when the art is removed. Let us grind up the mosaic tiles, exorcize them, and bless



# MARCH FOR LIFE INDIANAPOLIS



A day pilgrimage for high school and college students on January 22, 2024

Information and Register  
[diocesefwsb.org/march](http://diocesefwsb.org/march)

## AROUND THE DIOCESE

### Day of the Dead Celebration



Provided by Dave Stevens, Senior Director of Institutional Advancement at Indiana Tech

Students involved in the Warrior Catholic group at Indiana Tech pose in front of a Day of the Dead Altar they built in the school's cafeteria on Sunday, October 29. The group hosted an event for the school community to learn more about the Church's traditions around All Souls' Day. Students were invited to decorate a candle in honor of their deceased loved ones to place on the altar.

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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.

## Corpus Christi School 42nd Holiday Bazaar

**SOUTH BEND** – The 42nd annual Holiday Bazaar will be held at Corpus Christi School on Saturday, November 18, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., featuring more than 60 quality handcraft vendors. Altar and Rosary Society will be holding a basket raffle with many baskets filled with unique items. Lunch will be sold by the eighth-grade class which is offering its famous chicken and noodles and other lunch items. Contact Bonnie DeLoof at 574-261-8560 or [bonniedeloof@yahoo.com](mailto:bonniedeloof@yahoo.com) for information.

## Turkey Bingo

**FORT WAYNE** – Turkey Bingo will be held at St. Peter Parish Pavilion, 506 E. DeWald St., on Sunday, November 19, at noon. Instead of winning a turkey, you have the chance to win a grocery gift card to pick out your own turkey. There will be jackpot games to win cash and \$.50 Bingo cards and \$1 jackpot cards. Affordable concessions will be available for purchase. Contact Julie Workman at 260-418-2371.

## City of Churches Tour

**FORT WAYNE** – The City of Churches Tour will be held on Friday, December 1, from 6-9 p.m. Participating churches will welcome guests to view their beautiful worship spaces. The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 1105 S. Calhoun St., will host tours all evening, granting access to areas usually not accessible to the public. Guests of all faiths are invited to come and learn about this historic campus. Contact Kim Martinez at 260-424-1485 or [kmartinez@cathedralfw.org](mailto:kmartinez@cathedralfw.org) for information.

## 'Emmanuel' A Musical Journey Through the Story of Christmas

**FORT WAYNE** – St. Jude Parish, 2130 Pemberton Dr., will host a unique Advent experience "Emmanuel" A Musical Journey Through the Story of Christmas by award-winning musician Tatiana "Tajci" Cameron. She travels from Nashville, Tennessee, to offer an afternoon of music on Sunday, December 3, at 2 p.m. that will turn your holiday stress into a deeply spiritual

and sacred season. Contact Julie Schleitwiler at 260-484-6609 or [j Schleitwiler@stjudefw.org](mailto:j Schleitwiler@stjudefw.org) for information.

## University of Saint Francis Breakfast with St. Nicholas

**FORT WAYNE** – A breakfast with St. Nicholas will be held on Saturday, December 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the North Campus Gymnasium, 2702 Spring St., and features a buffet breakfast, story time, crafts, and photos with St. Nicholas. Tickets are available at [usfst-nicholas2023.eventbrite.com](http://usfst-nicholas2023.eventbrite.com). Call 260-399-8032 or email [alumni@sf.edu](mailto:alumni@sf.edu) for information.

## St. Matthew Holiday Craft Bazaar

**SOUTH BEND** – St. Matthew Cathedral, 1015 E. Dayton St., will have a Holiday Craft Bazaar on Saturday, November 18, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Guaranteed to have a little bit for everyone with many talented vendors. Enjoy delicious lunch items for purchase from the Student Council. Contact Mary Jordan at 574-360-1896 or [xraygirl101103@yahoo.com](mailto:xraygirl101103@yahoo.com) for information.

## REST IN PEACE

### Fort Wayne

Quintin Lepper, 29, St. Vincent de Paul

### Mishawaka

Devon Biesbrook, 88, St. Bavo

### Notre Dame

Sister Mary Ada, CSC, 94, St. Mary's Convent

### South Bend

Leona Kintz, 93, Christ the King

Gordon Langner, 90, Christ the King

Margaret Schlarb, 93, Sacred Heart of Jesus

Ronald Hosinski, 89, St. Adalbert

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

**FORT WAYNE** – Every Sunday at 1:30 p.m., St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 1502 E. Wallen Rd., hosts a sensory-friendly Mass that provides a safe, comfortable, and stigma-free

setting for children and adults with sensory challenges, mental illness, or any kind of disability. To find 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).

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"Today's Catholic is instrument for not only evangelization and catechesis, but also building communion, because it's informing the readership of the life of the Church in our diocese and building communion among parishes, schools, apostolates, and more," Bishop Rhoades said. "In this way, readers of Today's Catholic realize that the Church is bigger than their own parish."

"The material in Today's Catholic is invaluable in living the Christian life. Besides the news coverage of special Masses or events at parishes and schools, there are features or commentaries that also help to enrich people's life of faith. Today's Catholic is a great means to those ends of building communion, pointing to mission, and inspiring people to be more involved in the life of the Church. There is also a formation aspect that readers can find in Today's Catholic, which will help them in their prayer life, their understanding of Church teaching, but also their involvement in the mission of our diocese and the universal Church. Today's Catholic certainly will help to inform and educate people in their faith and inspire their calling to be missionary disciples."

**The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades,  
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend**

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