

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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New Vatican Document Defends Human Dignity

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Being a Christian means defending human dignity, and that includes opposing abortion, the death penalty, gender transition surgery, war, sexual abuse, and human trafficking, officials with the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith said in a new document.

"We cannot separate faith from the defense of human dignity, evangelization from the promotion of a dignified life, and spirituality from a commitment to the dignity of every human being," Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernández, Prefect of the dicastery, wrote in the document's opening section.

The declaration, *Dignitas Infinita* ("Infinite Dignity"), was released at the Vatican on

Monday, April 8.

In the opening section, Cardinal Fernández confirmed reports that a declaration on human dignity and bioethical issues – such as abortion, euthanasia, and surrogacy – was approved by members of the dicastery in mid-2023, but Pope Francis asked the dicastery to make additions to "high-light topics closely connected to the theme of dignity, such

as poverty, the situation of migrants, violence against women, human trafficking, war, and other themes."

In February, the cardinals and bishops who are members of the dicastery approved the updated draft of the document, and in late March, Pope Francis gave his approval and ordered

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Scott Warden

Kelly Ehinger watches the progress of the eclipse after praying the Rosary during an event hosted by St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Decatur on Monday, April 8. After Father Dave Ruppert led the Rosary, dozens of people gathered in the St. Mary parking lot to watch the eclipse.

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Eight Holy Cross Priests Ordained at Notre Dame

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

On Saturday, April 6, Bishop William A. Wack, CSC, of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Florida, ordained eight young men in the University of Notre Dame's Basilica of the Sacred Heart. He conferred the Sacrament of Holy Orders on Edward Dolphin, Nicholas Guiney, Stephen Jakubowski, Ryan Kerr, Tyler Kreipke, Peter Puleo, Michael Ryan, and Brian Vetter by the laying on of hands, followed by a long procession of Holy Cross priests imposing their hands in silent prayer. The eight new priests had professed perpetual vows last August.

"It is a great blessing to have Ed, Nik, Stephen, Ryan, Tyler, Peter, Mike, and Brian join us in the ministry of the priesthood," said Father William M. Lies, Provincial Superior of the Congregation of Holy Cross. "They are wonderful ministers of God's friendship, and each brings unique talents and gifts to our community and to their ministry in the Church. They will bring hope to the People of God through the sacraments and their service."

In addition to the superior's affirmation, each was presented by someone who had directly benefited from the ministry of the newly ordained priest since last summer. Bishop Wack, a native of South Bend, pointed out that not all dioceses follow this practice, but he applauded the wonderful recommendations.

Joshua Johnson, a student in the dorm where Father Ed Dolphin is rector, called him the "smartest, strongest, best smelling, and humblest" resident and praised his "meatball Mondays." Emma Jeppesen from the University of Portland has found Father Tyler Kreipke adept at answering her questions about both engineering and theology. Seventh grader Alexandra Marin Perez, a seventh grader at St. Adalbert School in South Bend, applauded her science and religion teacher, Father Brian Vetter, in both Spanish and English and said, "He's made me feel an important part of the Church."

After the celebrant declared, "We choose" these men, his homily explained their new role to both the candidates and the large congregation of family and friends in attendance at the basilica. Bishop Wack reminded the men that, despite all the preparation, "This is not all about you. It's about Jesus Christ's dying and rising from the dead! And it's about the people you will be serving." He pointed out that although many words had been said about them, only a single word was asked of them: "present."



Peter Ringenberg

A bishop performs the laying on of hands during the Congregation of Holy Cross, U.S. Province 2024 Ordination celebration at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the campus of the University of Notre Dame on Saturday, April 6. In total, eight men were ordained to the priesthood during the ordination ceremony.



Lisa Kochanowski

Bishop William A. Wack of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Florida, a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross, celebrates Mass during the Holy Cross Congregation, U.S. Province 2024 Ordination celebration.

He expanded a bit on that key word. It means, "I come before you frightened and inadequate but sure Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior," Bishop Wack said. "I mean with all my heart to love Him and to help show you how to do the same."

Bishop Wack's only advice to the men was "prayer," and he declared: "We love you, we're proud of you, and we need you. May you always respond with joy in your heart and conviction in your soul." He also encouraged the People of God to pray tirelessly for their priests and expressed the hope that the moving ordination ceremony might spark

some of those present or watching online to a renewal in their own faith.

Each candidate responded "I do, with the help of God" to questions about their intention to assume the responsibilities of the office of presbyter, and each knelt promising their obedience to their local bishop and their religious superior.

Then, the men prostrated themselves in the central aisle during a lengthy invocation of saints and a series of supplications. After the laying on of hands, each new priest was vested with a stole and chasuble by a mentor priest, his hands were anointed with

oil, and he received bread and wine with the words, "Receive the oblation of the holy people, to be offered to God. Understand what you will do, imitate what you will celebrate, and conform your life to the mystery of the Lord's cross." After being embraced by Bishop Wack, they took their place among the other priests for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Father Edward Dolphin grew up in Delaware, but the other seven men hail from the Midwest – three from Ohio, two from Michigan, one from Missouri. Only Father Tyler Kreipke is from Indiana (Zionsville). Family sizes range from Father Nicolas Guiney, an only child, to Father Mike Ryan, the ninth of 11 children and the second priest among his siblings. Some have been Catholic for generations, but Father Kreipke didn't enter the Church until he was in graduate school at the University of Notre Dame.

Before entering seminary, they attended colleges including Holy Cross College, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, and Drexel University in Philadelphia. A few of the newly ordained studied theology in college, but various forms of engineering were a more common major. They have held a great variety of jobs ranging from construction supervision to freelance photography.

Of course, each man has a unique vocation story. God spoke to Father Dolphin as an adult when he heard the story of the prophet Samuel being called in the Temple as a young boy. Several men were drawn by the joy and zeal of the Holy Cross priests they met. As a college senior, Father Puleo

went into his college chapel expecting God to confirm his plan to get married and be an engineer. After he walked out, he told his girlfriend he felt like he needed to explore becoming a priest. (They've kept in touch; she's now a happily married mother.)

Father Kerr wrote: "My junior year of college, I told my spiritual director that I believed that God wanted me to be a Holy Cross priest and that I was going to fight it. My discernment ultimately went the way all things will go. God won. ... To put it simply, God won me over not by being more powerful but by inviting me into a love that changed my life and made me more open, thoughtful, and compassionate."

Earlier in their formation, several of the new priests filled ministry roles in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Seven have been dorm rectors or campus ministers at Notre Dame or Holy Cross College. Both Father Kerr and Father Puleo taught in the Common Good Practicum at Holy Cross College. Father Kerr also assisted with marriage preparation at St. Pius X Parish in Granger. Father Kreipke helped with religious education at St. Joseph, adult education at St. Adalbert, and was a seminarian-in-residence at Christ the King, all in South Bend. Besides working in the Spanish-language Order of Christian Initiation at St. Adalbert, Father Vetter did his student teaching at Holy Cross Grade School, both in South Bend.

Beginning Every Day with Christ

Father Puleo has been serving at St. Joseph Church in South Bend, where he's had the privilege of living in the rectory with two priests (Holy Cross Fathers Matt Fase and David Smith) and a Holy Cross seminarian, Ben Sasin.

Father Puleo said it has been wonderful sharing life with these men who have undertaken a common work in the parish and school, as well as the parish's permanent deacon, Deacon Tom Labuziowski.

"Peter has been both an inspiration spiritually and a helpful resource for deacon information and knowledge," Deacon Labuziowski said. "Personally, I have gained much from his faith and sharing."

Father Puleo said he loves all the different ways he gets to be with people at different stages in their lives. On a typical weekday, he said, he may preach a homily at the 7 a.m. Mass, greet preschoolers arriving for school, distribute Communion at a nursing home, teach sixth and seventh grade religion, and lead a spiritual reflection at a St. Vincent de Paul meeting. He's also organized rectory resi-

dents in making home visits to bring food and hope to hungry neighbors.

Father Puleo said the work of the clergy "sometimes feels chaotic and disorganized. So much of it is spur of the moment, and the work is never finished; you just have to pick an arbitrary point to stop. You're navigating endless needs, and there's so much you can't control." But he also loves the spontaneity of all these interactions. Essential in all of this is the discipline of prayer, he said. "If I don't begin every day with Jesus Christ, everything goes wrong."

At the ordination Mass, Melissa Green, Principal of St. Joseph Grade School, along with her family, presented Father Puleo. Green said he "has been a blessing to our school community" and that "he models for all of us what it looks like to live each day offering one's mind, heart and actions to bring Christ to others."

"He greets us every morning.

Every single time we come into

his classroom, he welcomes us

with kindness. He has a distinctive

teaching style, and he's

good at telling stories."

VALE GOMEZ

Anticipating his ordination, Father Puleo said he most looked forward to being able to celebrate Mass. After all, he said, "that's the center of the life." When he thinks about his future role as a priest, Father Puleo said he is drawn to the ministry of education at any level.

After his first Mass at St. Joseph, with 10 priests concelebrating, he knelt to ask for blessings from his parents, observing a tradition for each. To his mother, Melissa, he gave the cloth used to wipe the holy oils from his hands during the ordination ceremony, and his father will receive the stole he wears the first time he hears confessions.

'I'm Working Harder Than I've Ever Worked'

Father Brian Vetter spent his diaconate year teaching junior high science and religion at St. Adalbert School in South Bend, as well as serving the parish as a deacon. He first realized he wanted to be a teacher during his novitiate year in Colorado, when he found himself more eagerly looking forward to his

time in a sixth grade CCD class than to hiking the Rockies on his days off. He was already a seminarian when he began the A.C.E. (Alliance for Catholic Education) program at Notre Dame in order to gain the practical skills he needed in the classroom.

Learning Spanish was part of Father Vetter's seminary formation. Besides being a priest and a teacher, he feels called to minister in a Hispanic culture, especially with those of Mexican heritage. "They bring so many gifts to the Church," he said. When he preaches on Sundays, a typical homily includes Spanish for the adults and a specific application in English addressed to the children. Father Vetter said St. Adalbert has been an ideal assignment for his diaconal year, as it has brought together every aspect of his vocation. "It's intense," he said. "I'm working harder than I've ever worked in my life, but I'm amazed how fulfilling and rewarding it is for me."

As a deacon, Brian has celebrated many baptisms, and he makes a special effort to meet people after Mass, especially families who don't have children in the school. Parishioners notice and appreciate his people skills, but he has a special love for teenagers, who are "at the time of life when they're figuring things out and making decisions about what they believe in and what's important to them. I want to show young people how God's love is working in their lives, sometimes before they're even aware of it."

Holy Cross Father Ryan Pietrocarlo, Pastor of St. Adalbert, said Father Vetter "takes delight even in the weird things kids say and do; [he] finds them endearing."

Not surprisingly, helping prepare eighth graders to be confirmed in May has been a special privilege.

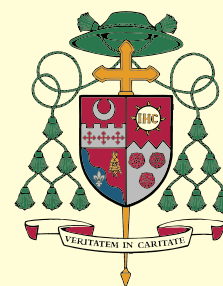
"He greets us every morning," said eighth grader Vale Gomez. "Every single time we come into his classroom, he welcomes us with kindness. He has a distinctive teaching style, and he's good at telling stories."

Jenni Crain, Principal at St. Adalbert, said Father Vetter has been a strong member of the junior high team and excels in lesson planning.

"He has the ability to break apart a big concept into little pieces so his students can chew on it. Having him teach both science and religion has provided a unique opportunity for the students to see things through a common lens."

Crain enjoyed hearing students greet Deacon Vetter on the last day of school before Easter break. They knew he'd be a priest by the time they returned to school. She hoped many would attend the ordination.

"It's like being invited to your teacher's wedding!"



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Monday, April 15: 9:45 a.m. – Mass and Pastoral Visit, Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne
 Monday, April 15: 5:30 p.m. – Meeting of Board of Directors of Catholic Cemetery Association, Divine Mercy Funeral Home, Fort Wayne
 Tuesday, April 16: 6:30 p.m. – Mass Closing 40-Hours Eucharistic Devotion, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Fort Wayne
 Wednesday, April 17: 10:30 a.m. – Meeting of Board of Directors of Catholic Charities, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne
 Wednesday, April 17: 7:30 p.m. – Presentation at Theology on Tap, Holy Cross College, Notre Dame
 Thursday, April 18: 11:30 a.m. – "You Can Lend A Hand" Luncheon, Century Center, South Bend
 Thursday, April 18: 7 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Elkhart
 Friday, April 19: 7 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Elkhart
 Saturday, April 20: 10 a.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Elkhart
 Sunday, April 21: 2 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Pius X Church, Granger



Priest Assignments

The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following assignments:

Reverend Peter Puleo, CSC, to Parochial Vicar at St. Joseph Parish, South Bend, effective April 6, 2024.

Reverend Brian Vetter, CSC, to Parochial Vicar at St. Adalbert and St. Casimir Parishes, South Bend, effective April 6, 2024.



Forty Hours Devotion



APRIL

St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne: April 14-16
 Blessed Sacrament, Albion: April 14-16
 Our Lady of Good Hope, Fort Wayne: April 21-23
 St. Adalbert, South Bend: April 21-23
 St. Robert Bellarmine, North Manchester: April 21-23
 Sacred Heart, Notre Dame: April 28-30

MAY

St. Joseph, LaGrange: May 12-14

JUNE

St. Anthony of Padua, Angola: June 2-4
 St. John the Baptist, South Bend: June 23-25

For the complete schedule, visit diocesefwsb.org/eucharist.

DIGNITAS INFINITA, from page 1

its publication, Cardinal Fernández said.

With its five years of preparation, he wrote, “the document before us reflects the gravity and centrality of the theme of dignity in Christian thought.”

The title of the document is taken from an Angelus address Pope St. John Paul II gave in Germany in 1980 during a meeting with people with disabilities. He told them, “With Jesus Christ, God has shown us in an unsurpassed way how he loves each human being and thereby bestows upon him infinite dignity.”

The declaration noted that *Gaudium et Spes*, the Second Vatican Council’s Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, also listed attacks on human dignity as ranging from abortion and euthanasia to “subhuman living conditions” and “degrading working conditions.”

Members of the doctrinal dicastery included the death penalty among violations of “the inalienable dignity of

every person, regardless of the circumstances” and called for the respect of the dignity of people who are incarcerated.

The declaration denounced discrimination against LGBTQ+ people and particularly situations in which people are “imprisoned, tortured, and even deprived of the good of life solely because of their sexual orientation.”

But it also condemned “gender theory” as “extremely dangerous since it cancels differences in its claim to make everyone equal.” Gender theory, it said, tries “to deny the greatest possible difference that exists between living beings: sexual difference.”

The Catholic Church, the declaration said, teaches that “human life in all its dimensions, both physical and spiritual, is a gift from God. This gift is to be accepted with gratitude and placed at the service of the good.”

Quoting Pope Francis’ exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, the declaration said gender ideology “envisages a society without sexual differences, thereby eliminating the anthropological



CNS photo/Pablo Esparza

Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, speaks at a news conference to present the dicastery’s declaration, *Dignitas Infinita* (“Infinite Dignity”) on human dignity at the Vatican Press Office on Monday, April 8.

basis of the family.”

Dicastery members said it is true that there is a difference between biological sex and the roles and behaviors that a given society or culture assigns to a male or female, but the fact that some of those notions of what it means to be a woman or a man are culturally influenced does not mean there are no differences between biological males and biological females.

“Therefore,” they said, “all attempts to obscure reference to the ineliminable sexual difference between man and woman are to be rejected.”

Again quoting Pope Francis’ exhortation, the declaration said, “We cannot separate the masculine and the feminine from God’s work of creation, which is prior to all our decisions and experiences, and where biological elements exist which are impossible to ignore.”

“Any sex-change intervention, as a rule, risks threatening the unique dignity the person has received from the moment of conception,” it said. However, the declaration clarified that “this is not to exclude the possibility that a person with genital abnormalities that are already evident at birth or that develop later may choose to receive the assistance of health care professionals to resolve these abnormalities.”

Members of the dicastery also warned about the implications of changing language about human dignity, citing, for example, those who propose the expressions “personal dignity” or “the rights of the person” instead of “human dignity.”

In many cases, they said, the proposal understands “a ‘person’ to be only ‘one who is capable of reasoning.’ They then argue that dignity and rights are deduced from the individual’s capacity for knowl-

edge and freedom, which not all humans possess. Thus, according to them, the unborn child would not have personal dignity, nor would the older person who is dependent upon others, nor would an individual with mental disabilities.”

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, “insists that the dignity of every human person, precisely because it is intrinsic, remains in all circumstances.”

“We cannot separate the masculine and the feminine from God’s work of creation, which is prior to all our decisions and experiences, and where biological elements exist which are impossible to ignore.”

AMORIS LAETITIA

The acceptance of abortion, it said, “is a telling sign of an extremely dangerous crisis of the moral sense, which is becoming more and more incapable of distinguishing between good and evil, even when the fundamental right to life is at stake.”

“Procured abortion is the deliberate and direct killing, by whatever means it is carried out, of a human being in the initial phase of his or her existence, extending from conception to birth,” it said.

The document also repeated

Pope Francis’ call for a global ban on surrogacy, which, he said, is “a grave violation of the dignity of the woman and the child, based on the exploitation of situations of the mother’s material needs.”

Surrogacy, it said, transforms a couple’s legitimate desire to have a child into “a ‘right to a child’ that fails to respect the dignity of that child as the recipient of the gift of life.”

Extreme poverty, the marginalization of people with disabilities, violent online attacks, and war also violate human dignity, the document said.

While recognizing the right of nations to defend themselves against an aggressor, the document insisted armed conflicts “will not solve problems but only increase them. This point is even more critical in our time when it has become commonplace for so many innocent civilians to perish beyond the confines of a battlefield.”

On the issue of migrants and refugees, the dicastery members said that while “no one will ever openly deny that they are human beings,” many migration policies and popular attitudes toward migrants “can show that we consider them less worthy, less important, less human.”

The promotion of euthanasia and assisted suicide, it said, “utilizes a mistaken understanding of human dignity to turn the concept of dignity against life itself.”

The declaration said, “Certainly, the dignity of those who are critically or terminally ill calls for all suitable and necessary efforts to alleviate their suffering through appropriate palliative care and by avoiding aggressive treatments or disproportionate medical procedures,” but it also insisted, “suffering does not cause the sick to lose their dignity, which is intrinsically and inalienably their own.”

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In honor of Mother’s Day, join Catholic Charities on April 28 at the Fort Wayne Country Club for an afternoon of tea with your mother, sisters, and friends.

This event will benefit our Counseling Services, which provides mental health services to 13 Catholic schools, as well as therapy, group addiction counseling, and clinical navigation to all those in need throughout our diocese.

When:

April 28 from 1-3 p.m.

Where:

Fort Wayne Country Club
5221 Covington Rd., Fort Wayne

Register:

Tickets can be purchased at
ccfwsb.org/tea for \$35 per person

Tea, light sandwiches, and pastries will be served.

MORE INFO AND RSVP:



Pastoral Leaders Welcome Vatican Document on Human Dignity

BY GINA CHRISTIAN

(OSV News) – A number of Catholic pastoral leaders in the United States are applauding a new Vatican declaration on human dignity for its specific treatment of several key – and contentious – issues.

Dignitas Infinita (“Infinite Dignity”), released on Monday, April 8, by officials within the Vatican’s Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, recounts the biblical and magisterial basis for the Catholic Church’s understanding of human dignity as inherent, since it ultimately flows from the human person’s creation “in the image and likeness of God” and redemption in Christ.

The document, written by Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernández, Prefect of the dicastery, was approved by Pope Francis on Monday, March 25, following a five-year course of preparation that “reflects the gravity and centrality of the theme of dignity in Christian thought,” the cardinal wrote in his opening presentation.

“We are grateful to receive this declaration on human dignity, and the U.S. bishops along with the whole Church will be studying and reflecting on it,” Chieko Noguchi, Spokesperson for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told OSV News.

Noguchi said, “the document emphasizes the long tradition of the Church on the importance of always recognizing, respecting, and protecting the dignity of the human person in all circumstances, and how that needs to be understood, celebrated, and applied to the various situations and challenges we face today.”

The declaration specifically addressed “some grave violations of human dignity that are particularly relevant,” specifically poverty, war, threats to migrants, human trafficking, sexual abuse, violence against women, abortion, surrogacy, euthanasia and assisted suicide, the marginalization of people with disabilities, gender theory, sex change interventions, and digital violence.

The list was not “exhaustive,” said the text.

Catholic pastoral leaders interviewed by OSV News said they welcomed the declaration’s direct treatment of such topics.

The declaration blasted surrogacy as a practice in which “the immensely worthy child becomes a mere object” and the woman, even if she freely participates, a “mere means subservient to the arbitrary gain or desire of others.”

Ann Koshute and Kimberly Henkel, Founders of Springs in the Desert – a Catholic ministry to those struggling with infert-

ity – commended that stance.

“We are grateful for the clear condemnation of surrogacy by the Holy Father and exposing it for what it is – human trafficking,” Henkel told OSV News. “It is a tragedy when a mother is separated from the child she has carried within herself for nine months. This rupture of the bond between a mother and her child can create an attachment wound for both.”

“We hope this document initiates a wider conversation in the Church about the pain and vulnerability of couples struggling with infertility,” Koshute said. “And we want couples carrying this cross to know that they are seen and loved, to recognize that their marriage itself is a great good, and that they are especially powerful witnesses and signs of contradiction in the world.”

The declaration called for “every effort” to be made “to encourage the inclusion and active participation of those who are affected by frailty or disability in the life of society and of the Church,” stressing that “each human being, regardless of their vulnerabilities, receives his or her dignity from the sole fact of being willed and loved by God.”

Charleen Katra, Executive Director of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, told OSV News that “recognizing the innate dignity of every human person initiates from an appreciation of one’s own dignity, having been made in God’s image, and a selflessness that impels us to freely share the love we first received from Jesus Christ.”

“Bonds of human love allow relationships to be built and faith communities to flourish, moving us away from a ‘throw-away culture’ – a term often invoked by Pope Francis – ‘or a ‘benefit vs burden’ mentality,” Katra said. “An impairment or

a disability never diminishes what it means to be a human person. God’s artistry is on display, calling us to slow down, to see our sister or brother in Christ as someone who can lead us in prayerful reflection and deepen our spiritual growth.”

The declaration warned that euthanasia and assisted suicide present “a special case of human dignity violation that is quieter but is swiftly gaining ground,” and refuted claims that such practices constitute “death with dignity” since “suffering does not cause the sick to lose their dignity, which is intrinsically and inalienably their own.”

Amanda Achtman, who works to end euthanasia and assisted suicide in her native Canada through her Dying to Meet You cultural conversation project, told OSV News that “conceding to a person’s suicidal ideation does not affirm their dignity; it offends against it.”

“To have reverence for a person’s dignity is to faithfully affirm that the world is better with them in it,” said Achtman, adding the document clarified that “people are not burdens; they have burdens.”

She also praised the declaration’s “explicit reference to the personalist tradition,” which “seeks a synthesis between the subjective and objective dimensions of ... human life.”

“This is particularly important when considering ethics because, in the face of objective truths, the drama of moral life consists in the human subject making a response to these truths with personal freedom and responsibility,” said Achtman.

Digital technologies, though offering “many possibilities for promoting human dignity,” increasingly tend “toward the creation of a world in which exploitation, exclusion, and

violence grow, extending even to the point of harming the dignity of the human person,” said the declaration.

The document’s inclusion of “digital violence” as an affront to human dignity is a “prophetic witness” to a violation that is “too often ... obscured online,” Brett Robinson, Associate Professor of the Practice in Catholic Media Studies at the University of Notre Dame’s McGrath Institute for Church Life, told OSV News.

“What the online environment lacks is an embodied encounter with others, direct contact with flesh and blood. It is in our bodies and in looking into the face of another that empathy arises and sustains us in more authentic forms of human community,” Robinson told OSV News. “It is why Christ Himself chose the medium of flesh and blood to save us. The prevailing problems of the digital age will require a creative retrieval of embodied human

practices like hearty handshakes, hugs, festive gatherings, and true attentiveness to the other who sits across from us at the dinner table.”

Lesley Kirzeder, Program Director at the McGrath Institute’s Contours of Wonder initiative – which focuses on childhood and the liturgical imagination – agreed.

She told OSV News that “our ever-increasing time in the virtual world” results in mistaking “the created world around us as one that is to be overcome and controlled rather than a symbol of God’s gratuitous love for us, to which we are compelled to respond.”

“In the digital age, we have come to operate in thinner realities that we or others create, realities that turn us inward, instead of in the full and rich reality of God – one that points us outward toward the other, toward our neighbor, and toward the Lord,” Kirzeder said.

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DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

Bishops Have 'Powerful Encounter' with Legacy of Racism

MONTGOMERY, Alabama (OSV News) – A group of Catholic bishops recently traveled to Montgomery and Selma, Alabama, in what trip organizers called a “powerful encounter” amid the nation’s long-running reckoning with racism. Archbishop Shelton J. Fabre of Louisville, former Chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism, and retired Auxiliary Bishop Joseph N. Perry of Chicago, the committee’s current Chair, hosted a March 18-20 “Bishops’ Lenten Experience” in the two cities, which were the endpoints of the historic five-day, 54-mile non-violent march led by civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in support of voting rights for Black Americans. The bishops’ visit to the sites had been coordinated by the committee on racism and the Washington, D.C.-based Catholic Mobilizing Network, which works closely with the U.S. bishops to end the death penalty, promote restorative justice, and advance racial equity. Touring the numerous historical sites commemorating the nation’s legacy of slavery, racism, and mass incarceration was a profoundly moving experience, participants told OSV News. “I don’t think anyone can journey through the exhibits without registering great emotion in the face of the human devastation involved in our American history,” Bishop Perry said.

Church Warns of Mexico’s Drug Cartels Entering Politics

MEXICO CITY (OSV News) – In an endless cycle of violence, Bishop Eduardo Cervantes Merino of Orizaba, Mexico, traveling with a group of priests, suffered an assault on Wednesday, April 3, on a highway in the border area between Puebla and Veracruz, officials with the Mexican bishops’ conference said on Saturday, April 6. While the group was robbed but unharmed, the incident comes in the middle of what is shaping up to be the deadliest election cycle in Mexico’s history, with 29 political candidates killed in the run-up to the June 2 elections. Gisela Gaytán Gutiérrez aspired to become mayor of a violent Mexican municipality, but the mayoral candidate was shot dead as she prepared for one of her first campaign events near Celaya. Gaytán’s death shocked Mexico. “Not only did they kill a candidate, they killed a host of possibilities for good, which were taken from this city by criminals,” Father Padre César Cadavieco said at Gaytán’s funeral Mass. “We have never seen an elec-

Pope Meets with Families of Hamas Hostages



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis speaks with family members of Israeli hostages held in captivity by Hamas during a meeting at the Vatican on Monday, April 8, six months after the October 7 attack on Israel by Hamas in which some 240 people were kidnapped and taken to Gaza. In an edited video of the meeting posted on X by L’Osservatore Romano, the Vatican newspaper, Pope Francis touched his hand to a poster with images of the children to bless them.

toral period so full of murders. This is something that should move us and shake our hearts,” retired Bishop José Raúl Vera López of Saltillo said in a March 24 homily. “They are fighting to obtain political power. What kind of rulers are we going to have if political parties are winning public positions through assassinations?”

Report Shows Decline in Several Urban Dioceses

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) – A new report shows the overall number of parishes in several U.S. dioceses has declined during the past 50 years, even as both the general population and the total Catholic population have grown – and the data points to shifts in where U.S. Catholics are now living. “Parish, Ecclesial, and Socioeconomic Statistics for 11 Dioceses between 1970 and 2020” was released

on Thursday, April 4, by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. The 775-page report from CARA had been commissioned by the Cleveland-based nonprofit FutureChurch, which had requested insights on trends within 11 largely urban Roman Catholic dioceses and archdioceses in the nation’s Northeast and Midwestern regions: the archdioceses of Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis, and the dioceses of Bridgeport, Connecticut; Cleveland; and Memphis. CARA’s Executive Director, Jesuit Father Thomas P. Gaunt, told OSV News the data aligns with his previous research on Catholic demographics in the United States. While the nation’s South and West have experienced a boom in the number of Catholics, the Northeast and Midwest have had “a bust,” he and fellow researchers previously wrote in

2021. Given the many factors affecting U.S. Catholic parish size, Father Gaunt told OSV News, in some places one bishop may be “building churches,” while another is “looking at empty pews.”

Pope Marks 800th Anniversary of St. Francis’ Stigmata

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The wounds of Christ’s passion and death and the stigmata given to some Christians through the centuries are reminders of “the pain Jesus suffered in His flesh out of love for us and for our salvation,” Pope Francis said. But, the pope said, the stigmata is also a reminder that through baptism Christians participate in Christ’s victory over suffering and death because “it is precisely through His wounds that the mercy of the Risen, Crucified One flows to us as through a channel.” With a visiting group of Italian Franciscan friars from

La Verna and from Tuscany, Italy, on Friday, April 5, Pope Francis joined celebrations of the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi receiving “the gift of the stigmata” after he had withdrawn to the hills of La Verna to pray and do penance in 1224. The friars also brought to Pope Francis a reliquary containing blood from the stigmata of St. Francis, a reliquary that is making a pilgrimage to different Franciscan communities.

Bishops in Rwanda Express Closeness to Genocide Survivors

KIGALI, Rwanda (OSV News) – This year, as Rwanda marks 30 years since the 1994 genocide, the Catholic bishops in the country have expressed their closeness to survivors of the massacre while urging those convicted of crimes to seek forgiveness. The bishops spoke as the East African nation of 14 million people began a weeklong mourning period to remember nearly 1 million killed in 100 days of slaughter. “This crime caused misfortune and pain, the depth and breadth of which only God knows. Hearts still bleed, wounds are still fresh,” Bishop Anacleto Mwumvaneza of Nyundo, President of the Rwandan bishops’ Justice and Peace Commission, said in a statement received by OSV News on Monday, April 8.

Court Condemns Canadian Cardinal for Dismissal of French Nun

LORIENT, France (OSV News) – A civil court in Lorient has ruled that a French religious congregation, Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet – a former high-ranking Vatican official – and two Vatican-appointed investigators committed “serious misconduct” in expelling Sabine Baudin de la Valette, whose religious name was Sister Marie Ferréol, from her own community “without cause” after 34 years of consecrated life. The religious sister suffered an expulsion described by court as “infamous and vexatious,” without having committed “the slightest offense,” and on the basis of “non-established motives,” adding she was “sent back to lay life without mercy.” The ruling was made public on Wednesday, April 3. The Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of the Holy Spirit was ordered to pay Sister Marie \$36,000 as a “duty of relief.” In addition, her congregation, Cardinal Ouellet, and the two apostolic visitors picked by Cardinal Ouellet are jointly ordered to pay her nearly \$216,000 for material and moral damages. The French Catholic newspaper La Croix reported the convicted parties have announced their intention to appeal the decision.

Bishop Urges Newly Confirmed to Be Strong in Faith

BY ANNA LAISURE

The night of Friday, April 5, will be one to remember for the confirmands of St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Decatur and St. Joseph Church in Bluffton. Bishop Rhoades confirmed 39 young people from the two parishes during a Mass held at St. Mary in a ceremony fitting for the joyous season of Easter.

The presence of the Lord was tangible in the midst of the church even before the confirmands processed in. As families gradually filled the pews, the excitement built among those in attendance. The flower arrangements and Easter decorations, coupled with sunlight pouring in through the stained-glass windows depicting various saints and angels, prepared those in the congregation for the sacredness of the event they were about to witness. The music from the choir and organist added to the beauty of the evening.

In reflecting on the readings for the Friday in the Octave of Easter, Bishop Rhoades encouraged the young people during his homily. While discussing the transformative power of the Holy Spirit on St. Peter, he said, "If the first pope and a great martyr had so many flaws, that gives us all hope for ourselves!" He highlighted how, despite denying Jesus before the Crucifixion, it was Peter who enthusiastically jumped into the Sea of Galilee to get to Jesus at the shore in the Gospel reading (cf. Jn 21:1-14), and how, because of the presence of the Holy Spirit within him, he was able to boldly preach the name of Jesus and condemn the Sanhedrin in the first reading of the Mass (Acts 4:1-12).

To continue the comparison with St. Peter, Bishop Rhoades brought up his own confirmation saint, St. John. Because of how close he was to Jesus, John was immediately able to know that Jesus had risen, unlike some of the other disciples who needed more convincing. Bishop Rhoades admitted that some people are more easily able to believe than others, but he encouraged the young people by saying, "The more we love, faith becomes easier."

Bishop Rhoades also talked about the many letters the confirmands had written to him. He was encouraged to read about the prayer lives of the young people and the many ways they were striving to grow in their relationship with God. He also admired



Anna Laisure

Confirmands await photos with Bishop Rhoades after receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Decatur on Friday, April 5.

their honesty in sharing their struggles. Bishop Rhoades acknowledged that prayer can sometimes be difficult and encouraged them to keep trying, even when they stumble. He also shared how moved he was hearing about the ways their sponsors were working in the lives of the young people. He mentioned one in particular who is a coach. This sponsor would often give encouraging speeches to the young athletes and tells them that God should always come first, followed by family, school, and, lastly, themselves.

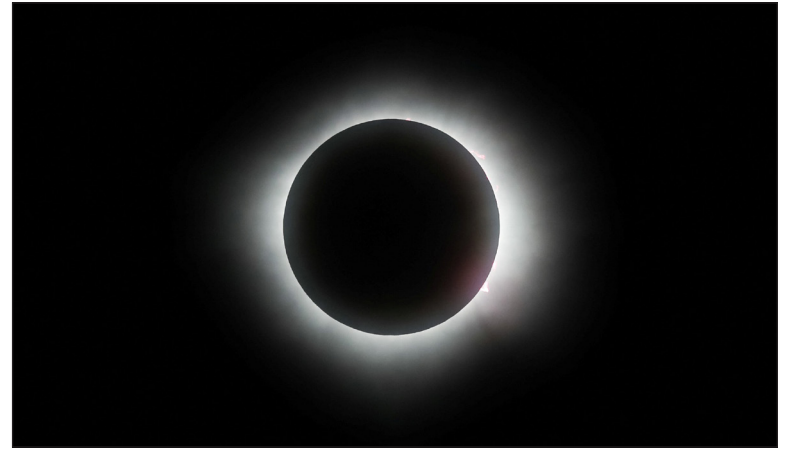
Bishop Rhoades offered much advice to the young people to help them stay strong in their faith lives. He first encouraged them to regularly read Scripture and to not let dust gather on their Bibles. He also told them how important it is to find the right atmosphere and time of day to pray. Some will prefer to pray in the morning in their rooms, while others will prefer to pray in the evening in a chapel or in the beauty of creation. He emphasized most especially to simply talk to Jesus like a friend. While memorized prayers are important, personal and authentic prayer helps our relationships with God grow.

Befitting the confirmation Mass, Bishop Rhoades especially expressed the power of the Holy Spirit. Many times, he reminded the confirmands

of the inner strength they will receive to bear witness to Christ and to be faithful disciples through their confirmation. He told them that the early Christians were admired by many pagans because of the way they lived. They took care of the poor, sick, and needy, and they rejected all forms of violence. No one was needy among the Christians. Bishop Rhoades challenged the young people to consider if their lives reflect what they believe. "It's easy to say, 'I'm a Christian. I'm a Catholic.' But that's not the main thing," he said. "The main thing is not that you are called Christian, but that you *are* Christian!" It is difficult to be faithful in our culture today without being criticized, he told them. That is why the Holy Spirit is so necessary for Christians.

Before confirming the young people, Bishop Rhoades jokingly told them to smell each other's foreheads after they are anointed, because, as St. Paul says, "You are to be the fragrance of Christ." This is what all Christians are called to do, and the saints show us how to do it. He told them to not be afraid to proclaim the word of God and how each one of them is a very important part of the Body of Christ. Finally, he reminded them of the simple yet life-changing truth that "God gives us the Holy Spirit to help us get to heaven."

Eclipse in Area Brings Young, Old, Rich, Poor Together in Awed Wonder



OSV News photo/Henry Romero, Reuters

A total solar eclipse is seen from Mazatlan, Mexico, on Monday, April 8.



OSV News photo/Gretchen Crowe

Father Spenser St. Louis of Queen of Angels Catholic Church in Fort Wayne and Father David Violi, Pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Bluffton, use protective glasses to watch the solar eclipse outside St. Joseph Church on Monday, April 8.



Scott Warden

Father Stephen Colchin, a retired priest of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, watches the eclipse during its totality on Monday, April 8, during an event hosted by St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Decatur, which was in the eclipse's path of totality.

Diocese Prepares for Annual Way of St. Joseph Pilgrimage

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH

Not many places have two churches named after the same saint within five miles of each other, separated by a river and enclosed in a county also named after the saint. But St. Joseph County does.

The third annual Way of St. Joseph Pilgrimage, honoring the area's local patron, will take place on the morning of Saturday, April 27. The five-mile, family-friendly pilgrimage begins at St. Joseph Parish in Mishawaka and winds along the St. Joseph River to finish at St. Joseph Parish in South Bend.

This pilgrimage was the vision of Will Peterson, Founder and President of Modern Catholic Pilgrim, a nonprofit whose goal for the past seven years has been to promote the practice of pilgrimage and make it more feasible for the average Catholic.

"There are only a select number of Catholics who can fly to Rome and the Holy Land," Peterson said, adding that "we should all participate in pilgrimages in some way."

As Peterson told Today's Catholic, Modern Catholic Pilgrim partners with a variety of local organizations, from parishes to schools to religious orders to families, "to get people the opportunity to participate in a walked pilgrimage in their own community."

The Way of St. Joseph is just such a local pilgrimage. In 2019, Will Peterson and his team came up with the pilgrimage to honor the saint who has so many local attractions named after him throughout the area. As it turned out, they pitched the idea a week before Pope Francis announced the Year of St. Joseph, which began in 2020 on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, and ran through the same feast day in 2021. Peterson remembers another member of the pilgrimage planning team saying, "Now we have to do this."

The pilgrimage has several groups involved, from the participation of members of the Congregation of the Holy Cross and the University of Notre Dame to the sponsorship of the Knights of Columbus and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend's Marriage and Family Life Ministry.

Also involved are the pastors of the parishes between which the pilgrimage is held. Father Chris Lapp, Pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Mishawaka, is celebrating the opening Mass and Eucharistic adoration before the pilgrimage begins. Mass will begin at 7 a.m., with adoration following from 7:30 until the pilgrimage begins at 9 a.m. Father Lapp called the Way of

St. Joseph "a great event for the local community."

"The patron of both parishes, as well as the river they walk along, and within a county named for him, too, provides a strong presence as the pilgrims walk and pray," Father Lapp said. "I'm especially drawn to St. Joseph's contemplative demeanor, which the pilgrims are invited into as they allow superficial conversations to give way to robust silence and prayer."

On the topic of preparation, the pilgrimage website (diocesefwsb.org/joseph-pilgrimage) encourages pilgrims to talk as a family about St. Joseph and to bring written intentions to offer. The website also welcomes pilgrims to carry something along the way, such as a holy card, that helps them feel connected to the saint.

There is a lot of emphasis on the accessible nature of the pilgrimage. There are two access points along the way for pilgrims who can't walk the entire five miles so they can join for part of the pilgrimage. Peterson is participating with his wife and young toddler, whom he said will walk part of the way and be in a stroller for most of the pilgrimage. No one should feel guilty about not doing the whole thing. "Distance isn't what makes it a pilgrimage," Peterson said.

The Way of St. Joseph will end at St. Joseph Parish in South Bend at noon with a prayer service. Afterwards, there will be music and low-cost lunch available at the parking lot and playground of the church's school.

With this being the third year of the annual pilgrimage, Peterson said most of the practical details are in place. A new feature this year is the involvement of the Notre Dame Women's Choir, which will lead hymns at Howard Park, the last stop before the end of the pilgrimage.

Christian Dennis has participated in the Way of St. Joseph once before and hopes to again this year. The pilgrimage is particularly special for him as St. Joseph is his patron saint. Dennis told Today's Catholic that the pilgrimage reminds him of all the routes St. Joseph walked with the Holy Family during his lifetime – from Egypt to Bethlehem to Jerusalem.

"It is good to take time and walk with him for a while as we make our life's pilgrimage to the New Jerusalem," Dennis said. "He is certainly walking with us."

Peterson said the only need they have is more pilgrims. "Join for however much you can," Peterson said. "We want you to come."

For information or to register, visit diocesefwsb.org/joseph-pilgrimage.



Molly Gettinger



Molly Gettinger



Today's Catholic file photo

Bishop Implores Honor to the Risen Christ at Holy Hour

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

Bishop Rhoades led the monthly Little Flower Holy Hour for Vocations on Tuesday, April 2, at the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Chapel in Fort Wayne. There, he exposed the Blessed Sacrament, spoke of the disciples' response to the Resurrection, and led those gathered in praying the Rosary.

In his homily during the Holy Hour, Bishop Rhoades discussed the story from the Gospel where Mary Magdalene encounters Jesus in the garden but does not recognize Him.

"I think it's important to hear [this Gospel reading] as we adore Our Lord the Blessed Sacrament to connect our adoration to the mystery of Our Lord's resurrection. This is really, really important," Bishop Rhoades said.

He continued to talk about how each of the disciples had their own individual "journey of faith" in coming to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. Beginning by recounting the reading where Mary Magdalene found Jesus in the garden, he moved to the story of John and Peter that followed.

John, having outrun Peter to the tomb, let Peter enter the tomb first, as he was the leader



Photos by Joshua Schipper

Bishop said, like Mary and Thomas, everyone today is at a different stage in their relationship with the Lord. He encouraged those gathered to persevere in their faith like the disciples did after the Resurrection.

He related this experience of the disciples to the exposed Blessed Sacrament on the altar, saying that Jesus is "hidden, veiled in the Eucharist under the signs of bread and wine," and recalled the story of St. Francisco Marto, one of the Fatima children, who referred to the Lord as "my hidden Jesus."

He finished his homily by comparing the death and resurrection of Christ in terms of the Mass. While at the Mass, there is a focus on the Eucharistic sacrifice – the death of Christ, a death that is "crowned by His resurrection."

"Notice we're obliged to go to Mass, not on the day Jesus died ... but we are obliged to go on Sunday, the first day of the week: the day of the Resurrection."

After the Holy Hour, Bishop Rhoades joined several young adults for appetizers at the Hoppy Gnome and chatted with them about the faith. One young adult shared to Bishop Rhoades about his journey to the faith, as well as his introduction to the Mass.

of the disciples.

"The Gospel told us that John saw and believed – [that was] all he needed," Bishop Rhoades said. "He was the disciple whom Jesus loved, the Beloved Disciple. He saw the tomb was empty. He saw the linen cloths. ... And he believed."

Bishop Rhoades said he thinks John was the only disciple who believed right away, and he mentioned that Peter believed that night when Jesus appeared to the disciples in the Upper Room.

Speaking of Thomas, the final apostle to believe in the Resurrection, Bishop Rhoades mentioned a simple practice

for Catholics to adopt. In the Gospel, when prompted by Jesus to touch His wounds, Thomas, finally coming to believe in the Risen Lord, said, "My Lord and my God."

Bishop Rhoades said that, as he was preparing for his first holy Communion, his teacher taught him to quietly exclaim Thomas' profession of faith.

"I still do that," he said, "but now I stand here actually holding the Lord."

Elaborating on the experience of Mary Magdalene, Bishop Rhoades said she had gone to the tomb on Easter Sunday to mourn, similar to how someone visits a cemetery after losing a

loved one. She, however, had no hope of the Resurrection.

Despite seeing the empty tomb, Bishop Rhoades explained, Mary first thought that robbers had taken Jesus' body. Even when Jesus appeared to her, she thought He was the gardener. It took Jesus calling her by name to believe.

Bishop Rhoades compared her response, "teacher," to Thomas' profession, saying that Mary "needed something more." While recognizing Jesus as teacher, He is much more than that, Bishop Rhoades explained.

"That's kind of why Jesus said: 'Stop holding on to me. Don't cling to me.'"

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Rev. Andrew Fritz, C.S.C., ordained a priest of Holy Cross in 2023, elevates the chalice during Mass at St. John Vianney Catholic Church, a Holy Cross parish in Goodyear, Arizona.

'It Is a True Privilege' to Walk with Abuse Survivors

Victim Assistance Coordinator Explores 20 Years of Serving the Church

BY SCOTT WARDEN

Every April, Catholic parishes and schools across the United States participate in National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

In 2002, the Catholic bishops of the United States met in Dallas and approved the landmark Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which outlined ways in which the Church could help prevent abuse.

For more than 20 years, Mary Glowaski has served as the Victim Assistance Coordinator for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. In an interview with Today's Catholic, Glowaski explores the progress made throughout the past two decades, the strength she's witnessed in victim survivors, the process of reporting incidents of abuse, and how her role in walking with survivors has impacted her own faith.

Today's Catholic: It's been more than 20 years since the Dallas Charter mandated that each diocese establish the role of a victim assistance coordinator (VAC). What does that role entail, and how has it evolved through the years?

Mary Glowaski: Everything has changed in the last 20 years primarily because many in the Church have learned that we must listen to victim survivors and to respond to them as true victims who need our care, support, and love. Victim survivors must be at the center of all that we do and all that we offer. Any initiative or response must be rooted in what they have experienced and how we can walk with them as they seek healing and peace.

In the beginning of my ministry, I truthfully did not know what I was saying "yes" to when I accepted the position of victim assistance coordinator. Twenty years ago, I doubt that many knew what was coming and what would be asked of us as we confronted such terrible suffering. The victim assistance coordinator is a position of care, facilitation, and advocacy. It is a remarkable position in that the VAC works for and serves the Church but also and most importantly serves those who have been harmed. Through the years, the role and



MARY GLOWASKI

focus of the VAC has grown as we have understood what it means to give voice to the pain of the abuse and to be certain that all we do is rooted in respect, care, and love. We have also learned that this role requires formation and most especially a deep love for Jesus Christ and for the Church. The pain received can destabilize even the most solid individual if you do not first understand that the Church must lead in love and transparency. A victim assistance coordinator is called to enter the pain caused by the abuse and to stay with the victim survivor as they speak the truth of their experience and, when needed, to give voice to their pain if they are unable to do this. It is important to understand that this is a privilege.

I have been blessed to serve under two bishops who have always placed their deepest concern and care for all those who have been harmed – victim survivors, our good and so faithful priests, and all in the Church who have been impacted by the harm.

Today's Catholic: It's likely that readers of Today's Catholic have been required to have a background check done and complete Safe Environment training in order, for example, to volunteer at their child or grandchild's school – and then, every couple of years, renew that training and get another background check done. Can you explain the role that these protocols have in keeping children of the diocese safe?

Glowaski: The harm that has been caused required that the Church respond in ways that would begin to restore a measure of trust in our absolute commitment to care for and to protect our children. When the bishops gathered in 2002, it was clear that this meant entering into a process

of training and accountability to ensure safe environments for our children. The result was the development and formation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The charter is a document that lays out exactly what is required of each diocese in the country to do all that we can to protect the most vulnerable in our Church. As part of this response, each diocese is required to have a safe environment coordinator to assist parishes and to oversee compliance of the process for protection that must be followed by every parish in the diocese and a victim assistance coordinator to receive allegations and then to respond to the needs of victim survivors.

Safe Environment training, which focuses on building awareness of the signs of possible abuse or grooming, has been instrumental in averting some very concerning situations in our diocese. Anyone in our diocese, including our clergy, who will encounter children and young people are required to complete background checks and Safe Environment training.

Although we are years down the road from the days of the diocese receiving three to four allegations a day, and despite the belief by some that we leave this all behind, we have evidence in the value of the training and the requirement of background checks, as the number of allegations received by our diocese and nationally has greatly diminished. In our own diocese, we have had situations of concern we have been able to address before any harm could be caused. This is exactly why we can never let our guard down in our care and protection of the young and vulnerable.

Today's Catholic: What other things are being done to ensure the safety of children that the faithful might not know about or participate in?

Glowaski: Bishop Rhoades is always supportive of trainings and formation opportunities for all our clergy and those in the diocesan curia as we continue to respond and serve all in our Church who have suffered from this trauma. This suffering in our Church is generational, as we now receive calls from parents, siblings, and children of those who were sexually abused and, as a result, what they have suffered as a family in broken relationships, serious mental illness, addictions, and mistrust of the Church – and, perhaps most serious and painful, is the wounded relationship many have with God. Clergy sexual

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abuse in many cases robs the victim survivor and, for some, their family members of the very relationship we as people of faith so naturally turn to when we are suffering.

Today's Catholic: Can you explain the importance of the men and women at the parish level who have been tasked with facilitating and maintaining these safety procedures?

Glowaski: Our parish Safe Environment coordinators are truly the unsung heroes in our efforts to protect our children. The tasks of a Safe Environment coordinator are very detailed and, in some cases, very complicated. Without their time, hard work, and commitment we would not have been able to rebuild trust in our Church. The work of the Safe Environment coordinator is certainly a compliance position that requires great attention to ensure all background checks and trainings for every diocesan employee are completed and up to date. And in the very rare occasions that an alert is received, it is the responsibility of the SEC to notify the pastor and/or principal. Safe Environment work is an integral and essential part of our response to care for our children.

Today's Catholic: It can be very difficult for those who have been abused to come forward. What would you say to encourage someone who has been abused to report it?

Glowaski: There really are no words to describe the courage it takes anyone to offer an allegation against one of our diocesan priests. It is unique and extremely complicated to ask a victim survivor to call the organization for which the alleged abuser works and served. In the 20 years that I have received these allegations, I have been extremely humbled by the strength of those who call to speak with a representative of the Church and then share such painful details of the abuse they suffered. I have received allegations from some who are very angry, sad, frightened, and confused, but I have not received a call from anyone to make a false allegation. In fact, I have received calls from a few who were hesitant to report for fear they were confused about the identity of the man who abused them.

We, especially our bishop, want anyone who has been harmed to know how deeply sorry we are for the pain they have suffered, especially those who may have shared their story in the past and were not believed or treated with the great care. I know that no matter what I/we can do, we cannot change the past, but we can and are committed to receiving all with respect, compassion, and a deep desire to help anyone who calls us to find healing. We have made mistakes in the past. I know that I certainly have, and as I reflect on the last 20 years, I know that I could have done better, but I also know that where we have grown most profoundly is that we sincerely

want to care for anyone who has been harmed – anyone.

It is a true privilege to receive the calls and to have an opportunity to offer someone so profoundly wounded the assurance that they matter and that we will hold their story and their pain with compassion and a commitment to work on their behalf.

Today's Catholic: If someone has suffered abuse within the Church – either recently or in the past – what should their first steps be, and how does the diocese walk with them on this very painful journey?

Glowaski: Anyone – victim survivor, family member, friend, anyone in our Church, anyone – can simply call 260-399-1458 or email mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org.

When a call is received, I will simply listen as the caller shares with me whatever they want to share. They will be asked very few questions, so they do not have to share the painful details more than is necessary. Once I receive basic demographic information, I explain that I will share the information with Bishop Rhoades and our Vicar General, Father Mark Gurtner. It is at this point that a full and very detailed investigation begins. If living, the accused priest is notified by Father Gurtner of the allegation, and our diocesan investigator is engaged to begin his work.

As victim assistance coordinator, my focus is completely on the alleged victim. I am available to meet or for calls

as they share more deeply the details of the abuse that has been suffered. Throughout the journey, I will keep the caller apprised of any decisions that are made and begin with them an assessment of what might best serve them. In some cases, it may take several phone calls before someone feels safe enough to share his or her identity, so it is essential that the caller is allowed the space and time to share what they can when they can.

There is not simply one way for these calls to come, but in all cases, they must be received with gentleness and care.

Today's Catholic: How has serving in your role as the diocesan victim assistance coordinator impacted your own faith life?

Glowaski: One hundred and fifty-three. That is the number of allegations we have received in our diocese in the last 20 years. Not all are reflected in the numbers we report or the number of victim survivors on our credibly accused list, but individuals who call to share that they have suffered, and in some cases to say they do not want to report for themselves but out of concern for others they believe were also harmed.

It is not only my faith that has been impacted, but I am changed as a human being as witness to the unspeakable pain and, even more so, the

amazing determination of victim survivors and those who love them to seek justice and healing, and to be known by and have a relationship with a God they believe abandoned them. Our victim survivors are the truest example of what living a life of faith means as they struggle to understand what happened to them and to confront the most difficult and unanswerable question: Why?

I have been witness to the gift of grace when our bishop looks into the eyes of a victim survivor and expresses his profound sorrow for what was done and the suffering that was caused, to therapists who help family members understand the trauma suffered in their loved ones and how they can find healing, to priests who are willing listen to a survivor and carry the burden of this communal harm, and, most profoundly, to victim survivors who can say they forgive our Church and even the men who harmed them.

I have learned what it truly means to enter the pain of another and have nothing to offer but my prayer and love. I have been graced to walk with victim survivors in the most raw, messy, and agonizing pain, and in these places, I have found God in His most real, gentle, and compassionate expressions, and I am profoundly humbled and grateful.



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A Eucharistic Word: Mission

“Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make Him known to others.”

These words in Pope Benedict XVI's *Sacramentum Caritatis* (“Sacrament of Charity”) echoed in my mind when watching the recently released “Cabrini.” The film captures the indomitable spirit of America's first citizen-saint, and viewers become well-acquainted with the diminutive nun's spunk and determination.

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini is no doubt one of the most important women in the history of United States Catholicism, and her character, as portrayed in the film, will inspire Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The love with which she served the poor and orphaned was clearly an extension of the furnace of charity in Christ's own Sacred Heart, making it apropos that she gave that name to the new congregation she founded. She was relentless in helping those whom she was sent by the pope to serve in New York City.

Through the international, social, and charitable infrastructure she built up, Cabrini had the objective of making Christ's love alive and visible in a world needing it so much. And she and the sisters in her congregation brought love where there wasn't love, brought faith and hope to poor immigrants looking for something to cling to that would help them survive the wretchedness that surrounded them.

“Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make Him known to others.”

But, like each of us, Cabrini couldn't give what she didn't have. That's why she made it a priority for her sisters to spend regular time before the Blessed Sacrament. She wrote to them, “Go often dear ones and place yourself at the feet of Jesus. He is our comfort, our way, and our life.” Doing such enabled Christ's own Sacred Heart to beat in hers and that of the sisters who banded together with her in the early mission she lived and breathed.

“Remember that the Blessed Sacrament is like a pillar of fire that is our light and guide,” she argued. It was in the Eucharist that Cabrini found the fuel for the firepower that came to define her life and holiness. It's the grace of the same sacrament that makes itself available for you and me, in the circumstances of our lives, to allow Jesus to live in and through us.

Sadly, though, “Cabrini” doesn't give much of a glimpse of the source from which the saint's Gospel witness and charitable zeal flowed. While her life is certainly an embodiment of the virtue to which she strove, rarely was she depicted in prayer, much less before the Eucharist, nor attending Mass. Cabrini once wrote that it is “in the shadow of Your tabernacle where I can enjoy that intimate union with You which is paradise on earth.” How I wish the film would've more often captured her in that shadow, impressing upon all of us how vital it is for us to be right there with her.

It was from the tabernacle's shadow, too, that Cabrini was



GUEST COLUMN

MICHAEL HEINLEIN

sent forth on mission for Christ.

Again, as Pope Benedict wrote: “The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in Him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: ‘an authentically eucharistic Church is a missionary Church’” (*Sacramentum Caritatis*, No. 234).

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini was a woman on a mission – a mission that was born in the Eucharist, from which should be born the Christian mission to which we're each called. After all, the word “Mass” comes from the Latin dismissal, “*Te missa est*” – “*missa*” meaning “being sent.” What if our sending forth could be as fruitful as it was for Mother Cabrini?

Michael R. Heinlein is author of “Glorifying Christ: The Life of Cardinal Francis E. George, O.M.I.” and a promised member of the Association of Pauline Cooperators.

Easter Gives Us a Reason to Hope

“We are an Easter people, and ‘alleluia’ is our song.”

We love to quote St. Augustine when we talk about what the Church of Jesus Christ is. And honestly, there may be no better description. But I think a lot of us, somewhere along the line, have lost hope that we will experience the fullness of salvation that Christ's resurrection signifies on this side of eternity. Instead, we settle for something far less than God intends for us.

What do I mean? Basically, that a lot of Catholics have simply given up.

It often goes something like this. We get a bit older, weighed down with adult responsibility, and the glow of our faith – our childlike trust in God – can begin to wear off. We pray, but the answer we want doesn't occur. We undergo times of suffering and loss, but there is little relief or consolation to be found. We grow frustrated banging our heads against the same walls and falling to the same temptations and sins again and again.

So, we throw up our hands and decide to accept the way things are – and even more to the point, the way we are. We convince ourselves that nothing will ever really change, that all we've been taught to believe just isn't going to work for us. God may be very busy blessing other people, but we can't expect to be holy, healed, or



GUEST COMMENTARY

JAMIE STUART WOLFE

forgiven anytime soon. Life, we tell ourselves, just doesn't work that way. The Gospel stories may well be true, but it is unlikely that Jesus will ever speak to us or transform us – let alone raise us from the dead.

Amid that kind of hopelessness, we may well be tempted to throw in the towel. Many have done just that. It's understandable, of course. There are only so many times we can ask ourselves, “Why am I here?” before we decide not to be. Or before we allow the lies of the enemy to distract, discourage, and distance us from what God wants to give us. The problem is that once we expect nothing, we become incapable of receiving much of anything.

Easter sets us straight.

The evil one wants us to believe that the character defects we've always had – the ones that are responsible for the bulk of the sins we confess – aren't going anywhere. That is not the case. While we may not reach perfection in this life, we can make genuine and

WOLFE, page 13

In the Eucharist, We, too, Are in the Presence of Christ



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

Third Sunday of Easter

The Acts of the Apostles again furnishes the first biblical reading. Almost every Sunday in the Easter season features a reading from this book of the New Testament.

In this reading, Peter preaches to the crowds in Jerusalem. Americans are very accustomed to impassioned preaching. They occasionally hear it in their own churches. They hear it on the radio and on television. Impassioned preaching about salvation and God's mercy is common in our society, godless as it is becoming.

Actually, to preach is to assume a great responsibility. Preaching, after all, by defini-

tion, is not simply lecturing others. It is speaking in the very name of God.

Those who preached, by ancient Jewish standards, were privileged people in this sense. None chose to be a preacher. Rather, God selected each preacher. Peter stood before this Jerusalem crowd after having been called to preach by Jesus, and Peter spoke in the place of Jesus.

He preached the words of Jesus. This reading makes three points. First, it establishes the identity of Peter. He is an apostle. Second, he is the chief of the apostles. He speaks in each of their names.

Finally, through Peter and the other apostles, the salvation given by Jesus still reaches humankind. They continue the Lord's work.

The First Epistle of John provides the second reading. The epistles of John are alike in their eloquence and splendid language. They are alike in the depth of their theology and revelation.

This reading proclaims the

majesty of Jesus, the Savior. It cautions, however, that accepting Jesus as Lord is more than lip service, not just now and then. It is actually living out the Commandments, by which, and through which, humans find perfection, love, order, and peace in God.

St. Luke's Gospel provides the last reading. It is another Resurrection Narrative, looking back to the beautiful Emmaus story. In the story, as this group of disciples was talking, Jesus stood in their midst, no longer bound by location or time.

He revealed to them to the full meaning of the Scriptures, the testaments of God's power and love. They listened, but they recognized Jesus in the “breaking of the bread,” the early Church's name for the Eucharist.

Reflection

The Church continues to summon us to the joy of Easter celebration by presenting us with this Emmaus Narrative,

so cherished by Christians throughout history. The Church proclaims again that the Lord lives!

We should see ourselves in the roles of the disciples who walked with Jesus to Emmaus. We have heard of the Lord. The Church already has told us of the Resurrection, of the Lord's sacrifice for us, and of the identity of Jesus, Son of God, Redeemer, but human as are we.

The Church has called us before to realize that true life – on earth or in the hereafter – is in Jesus. It has reminded us that each of us will die. It has reassured us that everlasting life is an option for us, if we accept Jesus as Savior.

This wonderful story of Emmaus instructs us that life can be difficult, and distractions many and forceful. Jesus alone knows the way.

As was the work of Peter, recorded in Acts, repeated for us today, the precise words of Jesus still are spoken in, and by, the Church. His mercy still flows to us through the Church,

in its sacraments, its charity, and its teachings.

Jesus comes to join us. He walks with us. He teaches us. He communicates with us. Do we walk with Jesus? Do we listen? Do we accept what Jesus says?

Open to the Lord, relying upon the Lord, not surprisingly, we ourselves find Jesus in the “breaking of the bread,” the Eucharist.

READINGS

Sunday: Acts 3:13-15, 17-19; Psalms 4:2, 4, 7-9; 1 John 2:1-5a; Luke 24:35-48

Monday: Acts 6:8-15; Psalms 119:

23-24, 26-27, 29-30; John 6:22-29

Tuesday: Acts 7:51-8:1a; Psalms 31:3cd-4, 6ab, 7b, 8a, 21ab; John 6:30-35

Wednesday: Acts 8:1b-8; Psalms 66:1-3a, 4-7a; John 6:35-40

Thursday: Acts 8:26-40; Psalms 66:8-9, 16-17, 20; John 6:44-51

Friday: Acts 9:1-20; Psalms 117:1-2; John 6:52-59

Saturday: Acts 9:31-42; Psalms 116:12-17; John 6:60-69

Poking the Hornet's Nest of In Vitro Fertilization

A sweeping decision by the Alabama Supreme Court back in February sent shock waves through the world of assisted reproduction. Alabama Justice Jay Mitchell, writing on behalf of the court's 7-2 majority, concluded that human embryos in in vitro fertilization clinics "are 'children,' ... without exception based on developmental stage, physical location, or any other ancillary characteristics."

A firestorm followed. The decision uncomfortably reignited basic ethical questions that those in the IVF business had hoped were behind us. It had obvious financial implications, since it allowed parents to seek damages against IVF clinics when their embryonic children were lost or destroyed. It effectively upended the tacit assumption guiding the work of every IVF clinic – namely, that human embryos are nothing special, just a "means to an end" or objects to be used in the quest to satisfy customers and improve profitability. As one commentator put it, the court's decision is "clearly extraordinary in its determination that in vitro, eight-cell, microscopic embryos are considered people."

But should it really be so extraordinary? What's extraordinary is the fact that so many people, for so long, could become so riveted to the falsehood that little human beings are not human beings just because they are little.

IVF has become so engrained in lifestyle choices that it's now not only awkward, but positively impolite, to suggest that pre-born life has intrinsic value, whether in a petri dish, a freezer, or a womb. Yet scientific facts have a hard edge to them, and as Ronan O'Rahilly and Fabiola Müller put it in "Human Embryology and Teratology," the third edition of their famous textbook, "Although life is a continuous process, fertilization is a critical landmark because, under ordinary circumstances, a

new genetically distinct human organism is formed."

The awkward truth for the purveyors of IVF is the fact that we are all embryos who have grown up, and if all men are created equal, then all embryos are human beings, each of whom ought to be unconditionally safeguarded and never exploited.

The Alabama court ruling thrust the state into the national spotlight and sent panicked lawmakers on both sides of the aisle scrambling to come up with a quick legislative fix. Only a few weeks after the judicial decision, the powerful infertility industry succeeded in convincing both the Alabama House and the Senate to pass legislation guaranteeing fertility clinics and doctors immunity from prosecution for any "death or damage to an embryo" that might occur during the IVF process.

IVF involves at least two major moral problems – the collateral damage problem and the intrinsic problem."

The collateral damage problem means that in order to achieve one IVF birth, clinic workers may create a dozen embryos, prescreen, and transfer several of the "best" ones, discard or freeze the "leftovers," and if more than one implants successfully, selectively abort the additional fetus(es). Those IVF-produced babies who manage to run this gauntlet and cross the threshold of birth still manifest elevated rates of birth defects when compared to normally conceived babies, another instance of collateral damage.

Parental wants are always assumed by the industry to trump their children's best interests, allowing for grave human rights violations to become standards of infertility care.

When it comes to the intrinsic problem, meanwhile, IVF always involves actions contrary to the meaning of marriage and to the core designs of human marital sexuality.

redemption of others. Easter means that what is ugliest in our lives is made not only beautiful but glorious.

Our sins, no matter how great, can be forgiven. There is nothing that puts us beyond God's reach, other than our own choice to reject His mercy. The enemy of our souls would be happy to see us wallowing in our own sinfulness, uncertain of God's willingness to forgive us. Easter shows us that is precisely what the Savior does for anyone – anyone! – who asks.

Salvation is not just a happy ending in another life. The stone has been rolled away. The reign of the Victor King begins here and now. We don't become who we were



FATHER TAD PACHOLCZYK

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

Even if parts of society assert otherwise, sex remains fundamentally about bringing forth the next generation of human life within the stable bond of marriage. Children are not commodities and are entitled to be brought into the world through the loving embrace of the marital act, and within the protective and loving environment of the maternal womb, rather than being manufactured and handled under laboratory lights by hired hands in fertility clinics.

Through IVF, we create an exploitable subclass – those who, although they are just as human as the rest of us, are unjustly instrumentalized and dehumanized by being brought into the world in a manner distinct from the rest of us. This subclass is produced and subjugated through human craftiness and scheming instead of arriving as free and undeserved gifts through the bodily self-surrender and fruitful spousal love of the marital embrace.

For those interested in understanding these issues more completely, I have recently produced two full-length videos on YouTube and Vimeo, entitled "The Struggle of Infertility" and "Why is IVF Wrong?"

Let us hope that the Alabama court's decision will provide the impetus for some serious soul-searching about the ongoing calamity of IVF in our society.

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.

created to be only by leaving this world behind. Death in all its forms has been conquered by the Risen Christ. We don't have to die with a full complement of all our sins and failures. Jesus breaks the bond of sin. We might be tempted to doubt the truth or power of the Resurrection as some of Jesus' disciples did. But Easter really does change everything, and it can change us. Even more, Easter can raise us from the dead.

Jaymie Stuart Wolfe is a Catholic convert, freelance writer and editor, musician, speaker, petaholic, wife, and mom of eight grown children. She writes from New Orleans.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for April 14, 2024

Luke 24:35-48

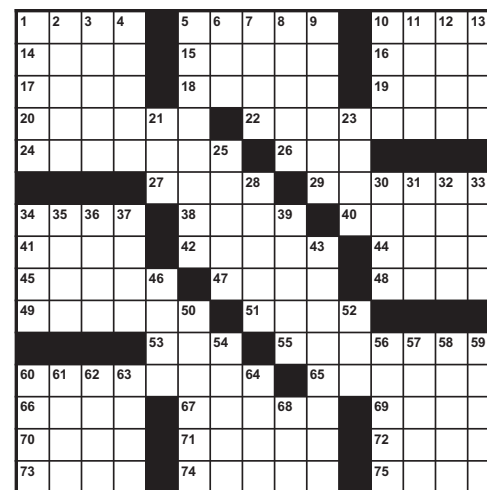
Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the third Sunday of Easter, Cycle B: The risen Christ along the seashore. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

BREAKING	BREAD	PEACE
STARTLED	TERRIFIED	A GHOST
LACK OF	MY FEET	IT IS I
TOUCH ME	FLESH	HE SHOWED
JOY	TO EAT	PIECE OF FISH
I SPOKE	PROPHETS	FULFILLED
SUFFER	FORGIVENESS	WITNESSES

PIECE OF FISH

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

- 1 Wise Men
- 5 "Let us ___ bread together on our knees"
- 10 St. Thomas' surname
- 14 Ardent
- 15 Administer extreme unction
- 16 Narrow opening
- 17 Vex
- 18 Sudden rushing forth
- 19 Sate
- 20 Does housework
- 22 Divide
- 24 Cushion for kneeling
- 26 OT prophetic book
- 27 552, to Nero
- 29 Catholic university in Texas
- 34 Paycheck letters
- 38 Patron saint of sailors
- 40 Aquinas' opus, for short
- 41 Seize
- 42 Burn
- 44 Frozen water vapor
- 45 AKA Sinai
- 47 Swindle
- 48 Throw
- 49 Part of the foot
- 51 Gordon Ramsay, e.g.

- 53 "How Great Thou ___"
- 55 Laborious
- 60 Governor of Judah
- 65 Michelangelo or da Vinci, for example
- 66 "I fear no ____, for you are with me" (Ps 23:4)
- 67 Commandment word
- 69 Hip bones
- 70 Angelus call
- 71 Not hollow
- 72 Season before Easter
- 73 Scraps of food
- 74 Shouts
- 75 Verge

DOWN

- 1 The Feast of the Annunciation is the 25th of this month
- 2 Home of St. Teresa
- 3 Patron saint of hermits
- 4 Thoughts
- 5 Music symbol
- 6 Cell "messenger"
- 7 Long fish
- 8 Catholic vaudevillian, Gracie

- 9 A BlackBerry has one
- 10 Title for a priest (abbr.)
- 11 Spanish pot
- 12 Defeat decisively
- 13 Rock add-on
- 21 Land in which Cain settled
- 23 Cries of discovery
- 25 Sins against the fifth Commandment
- 28 It's after Esth
- 30 One of the seven deadly sins
- 31 Alphabet string
- 32 He called for justice to roll down like water
- 33 Adages
- 34 Alphabet string
- 35 Press
- 36 They may be box
- 37 Encourage in wrongdoing
- 39 Archdiocese in Nebraska
- 43 According to Tobit 13, the gates of Jerusalem will be built with sapphires and these precious stones
- 46 "... but do not perceive the wooden ___ in your own?" (Mt 7:3)
- 50 Prim
- 52 WWII president
- 54 Lake in the Sierra Nevada
- 56 Beneficial
- 57 Greased
- 58 By means of
- 59 Declare
- 60 Mount from which Moses saw Canaan
- 61 "... ___ this day be at my side..."
- 62 Sword handle
- 63 Old cloth measures
- 64 Auditorium
- 68 Diamond Lady

WOLFE, from page 12

significant progress. Old habits are tough to beat. But God's grace makes up for where our efforts fail. The Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts is the gift of sanctifying grace. What doesn't happen here on earth will be completed in purgatory. The good news is that everyone who wants to be a saint will, in fact, become one.

We may be tempted to give up on healing past hurts. Dogged by brokenness and struggling to find peace, we can lose sight of God's healing presence. But the glorified wounds of Jesus show us not only what God can do. All we have suffered is given a part in our redemption and in the

Videos Offer 'Deep Dive' into Mysteries of the Mass

BY GINA CHRISTIAN

(OSV News) – A new video series featuring several U.S. Catholic bishops will offer what organizers call a “deep dive into the sacred mysteries of the Mass.”

“Beautiful Light: A Paschal Mystagogy,” produced by the National Eucharistic Revival, will be livestreamed on seven consecutive Thursdays from April 4-May 16 at 8 p.m. ET on the revival’s Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram channels.

Launched in June of 2022, the revival is a three-year grassroots initiative sponsored by the nation’s Catholic bishops to enkindle devotion to the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. The various events and programs of the revival will be capped by the National Eucharistic Congress, which will take place July 17-21 in Indianapolis.

The video series, which began on April 4, is hosted by Sister Alicia Torres, a member of the Franciscans of the Eucharist of Chicago and part of the revival’s executive team, and National Eucharistic Revival missionary Tanner Kalina.

The episodes, led by various bishops, will survey the central aspects of the Mass as part of what the Catechism of the Catholic Church (No. 1075) calls “liturgical catechesis” or “mystagogy.”

Derived from the Greek for “being led (or initiated) into



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of Indianapolis explains the offertory of the Mass during the first episode of the U.S. bishops’ new video series, “Beautiful Light: A Paschal Mystagogy.”

the mysteries,” mystagogy has, since the early Church, enabled newly initiated Christians to better understand the sacred mysteries they have just embraced.

The video series is intended for both viewers who are “cradle Catholics” as well as those who “have just entered the Church at Easter,” Sister Alicia said in a blog post announcing the series – and the participating bishops will also share their responses to “questions that are pressing on our hearts,” she added.

Along with a better under-

standing of the Mass, the series aims to help the faithful lead Eucharistic lives, Sister Alicia wrote.

The schedule for the series is as follows. All episodes, including past episodes, can be viewed at youtube.com/@eucharisticrevival.

– Episode 1 (April 4), “Sacrifice” with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of Indianapolis, who will focus on the offertory of the Mass, explaining how the faithful can unite their own offerings to the total self-gift of Jesus to the Father for the salvation of the

world.

– Episode 2 (April 11), “Praise and Thanksgiving” with Bishop Robert J. Brennan of Brooklyn, New York, who will examine the mystical Body of Christ while offering praise and thanksgiving to God.

– Episode 3 (April 18), “Called to Holiness” with Auxiliary Bishop Gregory W. Gordon of Las Vegas, who will consider the epiclesis prayer, through which the Holy Spirit is invoked to consecrate the bread and the wine – and the faithful.

– Episode 4 (April 25), “Jesus, Lord and Lover of Souls” with Bishop Andrew

H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, who is the leader of the National Eucharistic Revival on behalf of the U.S. bishops. Bishop Cozzens will explain the institution narrative, during which the bread and wine are transformed into Christ’s body and blood as the priest speaks Jesus’ words from the Last Supper.

– Episode 5 (May 2), “Paschal Mystery” with Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer of Atlanta, who will speak about the “anamnesis” (Greek for “calling to mind”), also known as the memorial acclamation, and how that sacred remembrance once again makes present the Paschal Mystery.

– Episode 6 (May 9), “The Body of Christ, the Church” with Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington, D.C., who will explain how the entire mystical Body of Christ – those in heaven, on earth, and in purgatory – is present at every Mass.

– Episode 7 (May 16), “The Joy of Trinitarian Adoration” with Auxiliary Bishop Joseph L. Coffey of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, who will examine the significance of the Doxology and the Great Amen, during which the priest elevates the consecrated host and chalice while proclaiming praise for the Triune God.

More information about the video series, along with links to the platforms on which it will be livestreamed, can be found at the website of the National Eucharistic Revival (eucharisticrevival.org).



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St. Martin De Porres Catholic Church Seeking Pastoral Associate

St. Martin De Porres Catholic Church in Syracuse, Indiana, is seeking a Pastoral Associate to help grow the parish through various programs.

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The qualified individual must be a member of the Roman Catholic faith. Experience in a similar position, education or non-profit administration is preferred.

This is a part-time position and some of the work can be done remotely. Salary will commensurate with experience.

Applications and resumes may be directed to
St. Martin De Porres Catholic Church
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Email St. Martin Church: stmartinchurch@yahoo.com

Deadline for Applications is May 3, 2024.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

'The Chosen' Season 4 Screening

MISHAWAKA – 'The Chosen' Season 4 has not yet been released for at-home streaming, but an exclusive screening of Episodes 1 and 2 will be held at St. Joseph School, 230 S. Spring St., on Friday, April 12, at 6:30 p.m. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. This event is free to attend. RSVP by calling the Parish Office at 574-255-6134 or email scohee@stjoemish.com.

St. Paul Chapel's Fish Fry

FREMONT – St. Paul Chapel, 8780 E. 700 N., will have a fish fry on Friday, April 12, from 5-7 p.m. Dine-in and carryout are available. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$5 for children 6-12, and children 5 and younger are free. For more info, contact katie@stpaulcatholicchapel.org or call 260-665-2259.

Spring Rummage Sale

AUBURN – Immaculate Conception Church, 500 East 7th St., will have a spring rummage sale on Thursday, April 18, from 1-6 p.m. and on Friday, April 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more info, contact Lisa Hess at office@iccauburn.com.

St. Mary's Fish and Tenderloin Dinner

HUNTINGTON – St. Mary's Rosary Sodality will be hosting a fish and tenderloin dinner on Friday, April 19, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. in the gym, 903 N. Jefferson St. Dinner includes cheese potatoes, coleslaw or applesauce, and a dessert. There will be a 50/50 raffle

and bake sale. Adult dinners are \$15, children 6-12 are \$7, and children 5 and younger are free. Carryout is available. The fish and tenderloin will be made by Dan's Fish Fry Service.

RETURN Book Study: Morning or Evening

MISHAWAKA – Are you looking for a successful strategy to help your adult child return to practicing the faith? Gather with fellow parents for seven weekly sessions to discuss the book, "Return: How to Draw Your Child Back to the Church," by Brandon Vogt. Sessions are held on Thursdays from April 18 to May 30 at St. Monica Catholic Church, 222 W. Mishawaka Ave., from 10-11:30 a.m., or in the evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. Register at ablazemission.org/return or contact Lisa Everett at leverett@diocesefwsb.org.

'Tweens, Teens, and Screens': A Workshop for Parents

GOSHEN – "Tweens, Teens, and Screens," is a free workshop for parents presented by Mike and Alicia Hernon, founders of the Messy Family Project. The workshop will be held on Friday evening, April 19, from 7-9:30 p.m. in the gym at St. John the Evangelist Parish, 109 Monroe St. The workshop will include presentations, interactive exercises for parents, small group discussion, large group Q&A, and refreshments. To register for this workshop, visit diocesefwsb.org/screens. The event is sponsored by the

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend's Marriage and Family Ministry. Contact Lisa Everett for more info at 574-386-2947 or leverett@diocesefwsb.org.

Most Precious Blood School Presents Spring Musical 'Willy Wonka Jr.'

FORT WAYNE – Most Precious Blood School presents "Willy Wonka Jr." in the Most Precious Blood gymnasium, 1529 Barthold St., on Friday, April 19, at 7 p.m., and on Saturday, April 20, at 7 p.m. Adult tickets are \$5, and student tickets are \$3. For more information, contact Angela Gernhardt at 260-424-4832 or office2@preciousblood.org.

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Patricia Lindsay, 99, St. Jude

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Mark E. Zahm, 70, SS. Peter and Paul

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Steve Takacs, 88, St. Adalbert

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St. Mary of the Assumption School in Avilla is in search of a licensed and qualified elementary or middle school teacher, preferably someone passionate about working with children in an educational setting.

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Huskies Find Success Playing for God, One Another

BY ERIC PEAT

When Saint Joseph High School boys' basketball Head Coach Eric Gaff first met with his team last fall, he tabbed 1 Peter 4:10 as the team Bible verse for the season: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

"We told the guys, 'You've got to memorize this,'" recalled Gaff, who recently completed his third season as head coach. "We would ask guys to say it during practice, and if they didn't remember it, we would run. ... It was cool to see them embody that and share their gifts with each other. You started to see guys doing it more – on the court but off the court even more."

Once this unselfish approach took hold, it transformed Gaff's squad into a contender and led to the program's first-ever state championship game appearance. Despite a 67-57 defeat to Scottsburg in the Class 3A State Championship on Saturday, March 30, the Saint Joe players walked away from Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis with lasting memories and brothers for a lifetime.

"It's definitely a big accomplishment making it to state," junior Chase Konieczny told Today's Catholic. "Semistate and state especially, I'll never forget – they were great environments. It's a crazy experience, something you've been thinking about your whole life, just kind of surreal."

However, the commitment to playing for one another didn't happen overnight. After an early January loss to Penn, Saint Joe was just 6-7 and in danger of squandering its talented roster.

"Against Penn, we had a 15-point lead at halftime and then threw the game away," Konieczny said. "The day after the Penn game, we had a meeting with all the team captains and coaches to talk about what went wrong. After that, we were a whole different team."

"We were playing really selfish to start the year," senior Jerry Barca explained. "When people realized the path to winning is to play selflessly, we saw how good we could be. There's a general willingness to play for one another after losing a tough game that we should have won."

Saint Joe finished the regular season on a 9-2 tear, winning six of those contests by at least 30 points. The week before facing rival Marian to open sectional play, Saint Joe players received extra motivation to play for one another, as the school announced its new nickname – the Huskies – on

February 27.

"It galvanized the guys," said Gaff, noting how quickly the entire school and community embraced its new nickname. "The kids got around it; the guys got ahold of it. We used it to preach togetherness, how we have to be one unit – being Huskies, you've got to be part of a pack."

That pack mentality helped the Huskies avenge a regular season loss to Marian and knock off the ninth-ranked Knights by 17 points. Saint Joe cruised to sectional and regional titles before a pair of contrasting victories at semistate: 88-80 against Peru and 44-41 vs. Delta in triple overtime. That set up a meeting with the fourth-ranked Scottsburg Warriors for the state title and prompted Gaff to once again pull inspiration from Scripture – this time, Proverbs 17:17, which reads, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

"Once they became brothers, they went through adversity, and a lot of guys sacrificed minutes or shots to make us as good as we could be," said Gaff, recalling his pregame talk with his team. "They were more than brothers, and it's special when guys can do that."

But even brothers are not immune to jitters when playing on the biggest stage, and the Huskies (20-10) yielded the game's first seven points to the Warriors (25-5) after several turnovers. That's when Barca – a senior averaging just 2.3 points per game – stepped up in a big way, connecting on a pair of early three-pointers to settle his team down.

"That's kind of been my role all season," Barca said of setting the tone. "My job, on our scouting report, is to control the pace and control the flow of the game. We had a couple turnovers early, but when my teammates saw me hitting shots, it was a reminder that we needed to be locked in."

"I knew he would bring his best effort, because he always does – that's the kind of guy he is," Gaff said of Barca. "It's not about the stats on paper, because he puts as much time in as anyone else; he just plays second fiddle to Chase [Konieczny] and Jayce [Lee]. He really got us back in the game. He hit a couple threes and made some big passes. I knew what he was capable of doing, he just wasn't required to do it up to that point. He definitely saved his best for our last game."

Behind a 17-5 run, the Huskies claimed a one-point advantage just before halftime. In a game with eight lead changes and five ties, it was Saint Joe leading 50-49



Saint Joseph High School senior Jerry Barca was named the Arthur L. Trester Mental Attitude Award Winner following the game.

entering the fourth quarter. However, Scottsburg's zone defense, which forced Saint Joe into 16 turnovers, wore down the Huskies and prevented them from getting their transition game going. Senior Jayce Lee's jumper with 2:46 to go pulled the Huskies within a point at 58-57, but the Warriors would score the final nine points of the game to pull away.

Konieczny led the Huskies with 15 points and a game-high 11 rebounds, while Barca added 12 points. Lee, who was limited by foul trouble, scored 11 points, with freshman

Elijah King and sophomore Braylen White contributing nine and eight points, respectively. Konieczny was quick to address his teammates after the game.

"I definitely thanked them; we're going to be brothers for life," Konieczny said of the graduating seniors. "I also talked to the younger guys. I told them that we have a really bright future – we're young and only graduating two [starters]. If we work hard in the offseason, we can be right here next year."

Moments after the final buzzer, Barca was announced

Photos provided by Saint Joseph High School
The Saint Joe boys basketball team poses after falling to Scottsburg in the 3A State Championship Game at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis on Saturday, March 30.

as the winner of the Arthur L. Trester Mental Attitude Award, an annual honor bestowed on a senior in each class who has "demonstrated excellence in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership, and athletic ability." Barca, who plans to study neuroscience at Notre Dame, is the Class of 2024 salutatorian and Saint Joe Student Body President, among other numerous distinctions.

"It was incredible," Barca said of receiving the award. "I'm not originally from Indiana, so I didn't know what a big deal it was. After the fact, my dad and my coach relayed all sorts of messages to me congratulating me. It was a little harder to look back on five minutes after the loss, but I am extremely grateful. It just shows that all the little things I do behind the scenes were paying off."

Indeed, the little things paid off all season long for the Huskies, especially when it came to growing together in their faith. While every practice began and ended in prayer, Gaff admitted that sometimes he got so caught up in basketball that his players had to remind him.

"They were making sure our Catholic identity didn't slip out of focus," said Gaff. "That's one of the special things about Saint Joe and our diocese as a whole: We're here to build men to be great leaders, to build for the future, and to drive people toward Christ."