

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 98 No. 16

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Bishop Rhoades Visits St. Michael School in Plymouth

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH



Kasia Balsbaugh

Bishop Rhoades preaches a homily to schoolchildren from St. Michael School in Plymouth on Thursday, April 11.

“Are we here to play basketball?” Bishop Rhoades joked to the kindergarteners and first graders gathered to meet him in the gym at St. Michael Catholic School in Plymouth.

After the bishop told the excited students that he couldn’t play after all – he didn’t bring his sneakers and might slide – one of the students suggested, “But then you can be faster than all of us!”

Instead, the students found themselves engaged after Bishop Rhoades began a conversation about heaven, hell, and the Resurrection.

During his pastoral visit to St. Michael on Thursday, April 11, Bishop Rhoades opened the day with an all-school Mass at the adjoining parish church, then visited classrooms after breakfast.

St. Michael has been around since the time of the Civil War. Amy Weidner, Principal of the school, attended the school herself in the 1970s, and her

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Fort Wayne Mayor
Thomas C. Henry
Laid to Rest

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The Church’s Prophetic Guide to Participating in American Political Life

BY ALEXANDER MINGUS

*In the leadup to Indiana’s primary elections on Tuesday, May 7, and the general elections in November, the bishops of the United States, including Bishop Rhoades, are urging the faithful to examine and carefully consider their recently updated document on how Catholics are called to participate in political life, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*. Beginning this week and spanning the next two issues (April 28 and May 5), *Today’s Catholic* will be publishing reflections on this document, which outlines key issues and information for the faithful to consider.*

This May, and perhaps more acutely in the months leading up to November, our nation will be hurled into the whirlwind of politics as we have come to know it: bitter political ads, partisan attacks, sound bites, and media hype.

When Americans first began watching televised debates in American politics in 1960, Richard Nixon ended his opening statement in a way that would shock most of us attuned to today’s debates: “I know Senator Kennedy feels as deeply about these problems as I do. But our disagreement is not about the goals for America, but

only about the means to reach those goals.”

Say what you will about Nixon, JFK, or the state of America in the 1960s, but the rest of the debate undoubtedly transpired with no personal attacks, several instances of respectful disagreement, and even moments of praise of the other candidate’s sincerity.

It is of no use to us to look back at this moment in history with rose-colored glasses, nor to ignore the issues of grave importance that drive the deepening polarization of today. We can, however, examine how the exchanges within that debate exemplify the increasingly lost virtue of civic friendship in public life. The loss of civic friendship,

a symptom of increasing polarization, is but one example of the ways our political discourse contradicts the Gospel.

Our Catholic vision of politics compels an even deeper examination: We’re not to be only concerned with civic friendship, but also committed to a defense of the timeless principles of the Gospel found in the Catholic social teaching: the dignity of the human person, solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good.

If these principles sound foreign, I invite you to begin wrestling with a fundamental question: When participating in public life, what does Christ and His Church ask of me?

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POLITICS, from page 1

The bishops of the United States have regularly issued statements on political responsibility since 1976, offering judgements of American political life based on the Church's moral teaching. In this article, I will begin examining the introductory note and the first part of the U.S. bishops' most recent document: *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*. In this document, we can begin to find answers to that fundamental question I posed above.

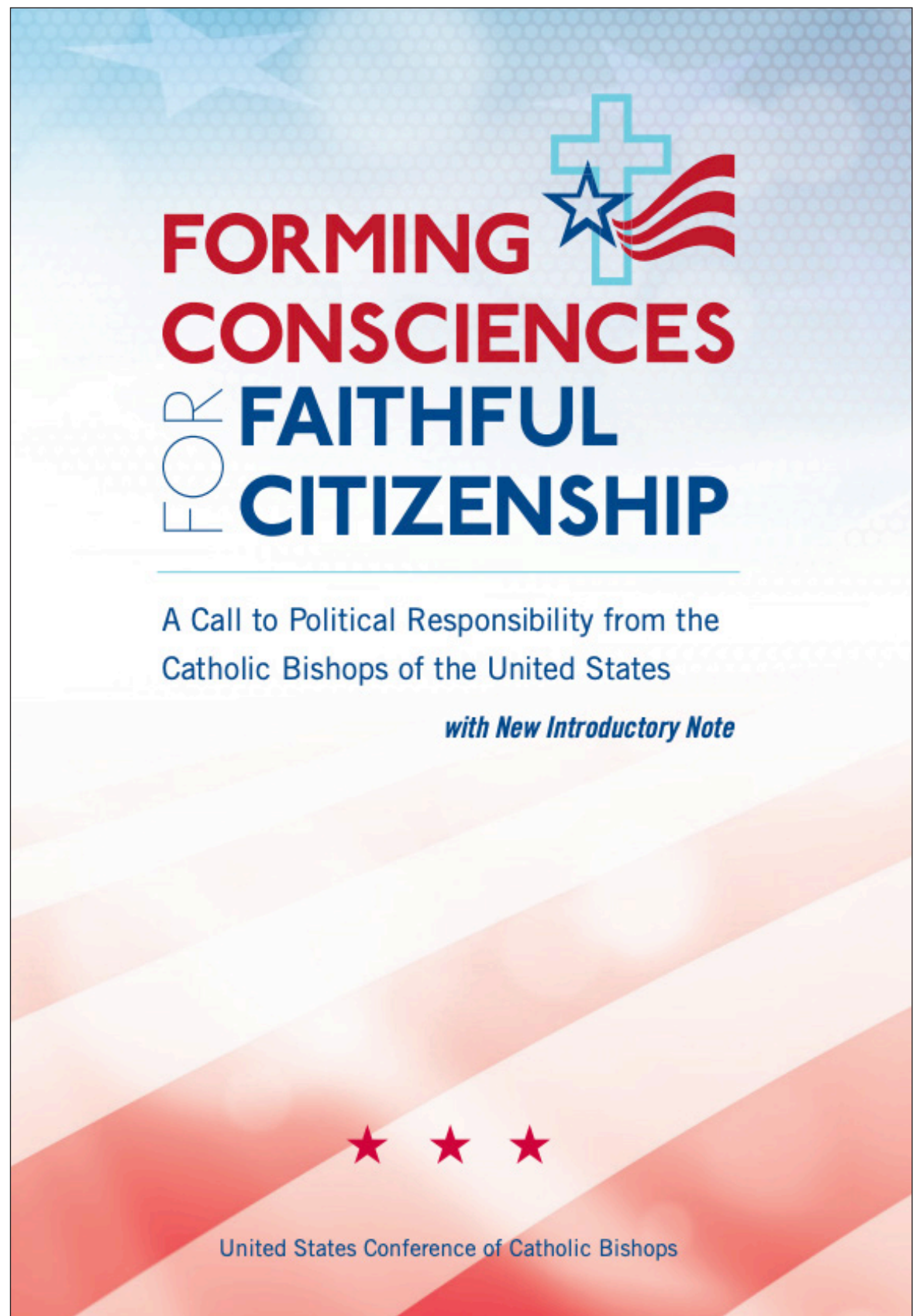
Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship challenges Catholics to be faithful in a way that is profoundly more radical and beautiful than the solutions to social problems found in our partisan politics. It is a document that vigorously defends nonpartisan, issue-based advocacy, the beauty of the Church's social teaching and moral principles, and the importance of a well-formed conscience.

"Allowing your conscience to be stretched and formed by these reflections can give you peace! They point to Jesus' challenge to show mercy to those in need, just as the Good Samaritan," say the bishops in the introductory note. The bishops also exhort the faithful to put on the "mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16) when forming our conscience. This is no small feat, one that requires a firm and persevering commitment to the exercise of many virtues.

As the name suggests, "forming consciences" is central to the bishops' message. To some, it may seem like the bishops are not saying much here, opting for a gentle, non-controversial tone and the offering of a general moral platitude to guide political decision-making. Nothing could be further from the truth, because it is indeed *the* truth that must inform our conscience: "the truth is something we receive," the bishops wrote, "not something we make."

Far from wanting to avoid commentary on important moral issues, the bishops outline the Church's moral priorities in specific issue areas: abortion is a "preeminent" priority, but other grave threats to human life and dignity include "euthanasia, gun violence, the death penalty, and human trafficking. There is also the redefinition of marriage and gender, threats to religious freedom at home and abroad, lack of justice for the poor, the suffering of migrants and refugees, wars and famines around the world, racism, the need for greater access to health care and education, care for our common home, and more."

When we see this list, we must stop to examine how our own consciences are formed on each of these issues. One of the central purposes of *Forming Consciences for Faithful*



Citizenship is to convict us of our obligation to first examine social issues through reflection on God's revelation and the teachings of the Church and allow that foundation to shape our participation in politics and in political parties. Unfortunately, Catholics face the immense pressures of a society at war with itself. We are constantly tempted to remove foundational moral principles from our vocabulary in the name of the "separation of church and state." This interpretation of the U.S. Constitution's establishment clause is neither correct nor does it honor our Christian obligation to be a faithful citizen.

Living in this dissonance can profoundly affect our spiritual and mental health, and it's no surprise that many Catholics feel a sense of despair, anger, hopelessness, and apathy toward participation in public life. But the bishops' docu-

ment is clear: "the teachings of the Church ... offer a vision of hope, where justice and mercy abound, because God is the infinite source of all goodness and love." In study, prayer, and the practice of prudence, we can move from hopelessness to fruitful participation, knowing our work in this world is important while keeping an eye fixed on the promise of eternal life in our heavenly home.

The bishops, citing the Letter to the Ephesians, also remind us of how we can find peace with *how* we participate – to "never let evil talk pass your lips." We are reminded again of the civic friendship on display in that 1960 debate.

St. Paul goes on: "say only the good things men need to hear, things that will really help them. Do nothing that will sadden the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed against the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, all passion and

anger, harsh words, slander, and malice of every kind. In place of these, be kind to one another, compassionate, and mutually forgiving, just as God has forgiven you in Christ" (Eph 4:29-32).

If we heed St. Paul's words, we more closely align our lives with the demands of the Gospel, thus answering the call to be faithful citizens.

If you haven't already, I invite you to read through *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* this year and follow along with subsequent articles, where we will explore parts 2 and 3 of the document.

For more information, visit faithfulcitizenship.org.

Alexander Mingus is the Associate Director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, which is the public policy arm of the Catholic bishops of Indiana.

Pope Grants Indulgences for Participants of National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, Congress

BY MARIA WIERING

(OSV News) – Participants in the National Eucharistic Congress and the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage now have opportunities to receive plenary indulgences, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, announced on Tuesday, April 9.

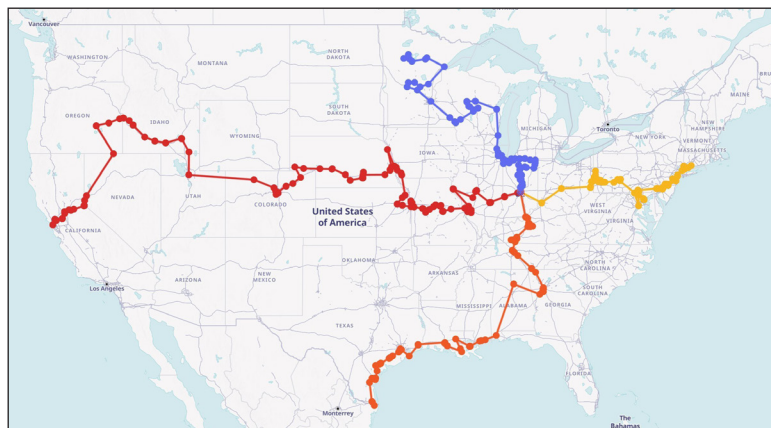
“It is with gratitude to the Holy Father that we receive his apostolic blessing upon the participants in the National Eucharistic Congress, and for the opportunity for Catholics in our country to obtain a plenary indulgence by participating in the events of the Eucharistic Revival,” he said in a statement.

Archbishop Broglio, who also leads the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, had requested that a plenary indulgence be available to Catholics who participate in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and that “he or another prelate be designated to impart the apostolic blessing with a plenary indulgence” to the faithful joining the National Eucharistic Congress.

The requests were granted in two separate decrees by the Apostolic Penitentiary, an office with the Church’s central administrative body known as the Roman Curia, which grants the use of indulgences “as expressions of divine mercy,” the statement said. Both decrees were approved by Pope Francis.

The congress and preceding pilgrimage are efforts of the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year initiative of the U.S. bishops that began in 2022 to inspire greater understanding of and love for Jesus in the Eucharist. Held in Indianapolis from July 17-21 at Lucas Oil Stadium, the congress aims to bring together tens of thousands of Catholics for liturgies, devotions, and well-known Catholic speakers.

Beginning the weekend of May 17-18, 24 young adults in four groups are traveling thousands of miles to the congress from beginning points in California, Connecticut, Minnesota, and Texas. Pilgrims in this National Eucharistic Pilgrimage plan to travel – often by foot – with the Eucharist in a monstrance, with stops along the routes for Mass and Eucharistic adoration at local parishes and national shrines. The Marian Route, which begins in Minnesota, will make stops at 11 parishes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South



OSV News illustration/courtesy National Eucharistic Congress

This updated map shows the four routes of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage to the National Eucharistic Congress in 2024. Participants in the National Eucharistic Congress will have opportunities to receive plenary indulgences, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, announced on Tuesday, April 9.

Bend from July 5-10.

Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, Chair of the Board of Directors of the National Eucharistic Congress, told OSV News that the “tradition of giving an indulgence for pilgrimages and important celebrations is ancient.”

“We are grateful to the Holy Father through the Apostolic Penitentiary that offers this blessing to those who are seeking to grow in greater purity of heart through the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress,” he said. “These events will be great moments of conversion which this indulgence points to as we seek to be free from the effects of our sins. We are grateful for the Holy Father’s blessing on these events.”

He added, “Pope Francis himself said that (the) ‘National Eucharistic Congress marks a significant moment in the life of the Church in the United States’ and he prayed that the National Eucharistic Congress would guide men and women throughout our country to the Lord who, by His presence among us, rekindles hope and renews life.”

According to the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: “Indulgences are the remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven. The faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains the indulgence under prescribed conditions for either himself or the departed. Indulgences are granted through the ministry of the Church which, as the dispenser of the grace of redemption, distributes the treasury of the merits of Christ and the saints.”

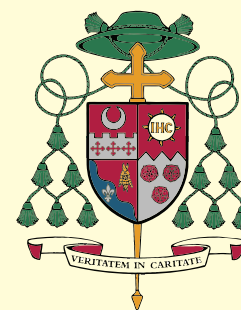
One may obtain indulgences for other people but can only apply them to the souls in purgatory. One may also obtain

the indulgence for oneself. But one cannot apply an indulgence to another living person; that person (unlike someone in purgatory) can still obtain one for himself or herself.

The plenary indulgence for National Eucharistic Pilgrimage is granted to anyone who participates in the pilgrimage between May 17 and July 16, as well as to elders, people with infirmities, and “all those who cannot leave their homes for a serious reason and who participate in spirit with the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, uniting their prayers, pains, or inconveniences with Christ and the pilgrimage,” the USCCB officials said in a statement. To receive the indulgence, an individual must fulfill the usual conditions: sacramental confession, Communion, and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father.

The second decree of the papal blessing with plenary indulgence for the National Eucharistic Congress empowers Archbishop Broglio or another prelate assigned by him to impart it, following Mass, to the faithful participating in the congress. However, Catholics who “due to reasonable circumstances and with pious intention” cannot be physically at the congress may also receive the indulgence if they have participated in Mass and received the blessing through media communications.

“Through the efforts of the revival over the last two years, we have been building up to the pilgrimage and congress that will offer Catholics a chance to experience a profound, personal revival of faith in the Eucharist,” said Archbishop Broglio. “Pope Francis continues to encourage and support us as we seek to share Christ’s love with a world that is desperately in need of Him.”



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

- Monday, April 22: 10:30 a.m. – Tour and Luncheon with Bishop Dwenger High School Theology Students, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne
- Tuesday, April 23: 10:30 a.m. – Presbyteral Council Meeting, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church Basement, Warsaw
- Wednesday, April 24: 11:30 a.m. – “You Can Lend A Hand” Luncheon, The Grand Wayne Center, Fort Wayne
- Thursday, April 25: 7 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, SS. Peter and Paul Church, Huntington
- Friday, April 26: Noon – Meeting with Annual Bishop’s Appeal Committee, Boathouse Restaurant, Winona Lake
- Friday, April 26: 6 p.m. – Luers Knight, Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne
- Saturday, April 27: 9:30 a.m. – Confirmation Mass, Culver Academies Memorial Chapel, Culver
- Saturday, April 27: 5 p.m. – Mass for Evangelium Vitae Medal Award, Basilica of the Sacred Heart, University of Notre Dame
- Sunday, April 28: Noon – Confirmation Mass with Rite of Full Communion, Basilica of the Sacred Heart, University of Notre Dame
- Sunday, April 28: 5 p.m. – Vespers and Dinner with Holy Cross Seminarians, Old College, University of Notre Dame



DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

The following recent changes and additions have been made to the diocesan list of Clergy Credibly Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor:

Jan Klimczyk, deceased, has been added to the list of Clergy Credibly Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor.

Stephen Cvaniga, deceased, has been added to the list of Clergy Credibly Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor.

The number of credible allegations against **Michael Buescher**, who was dismissed from the clerical state on May 14, 1991, and is already on the list, has been changed from 6 to 7.

The number of credible allegations against **Edward Krason**, deceased, who is already on the list, has been changed from 1 to 2.

The full diocesan list of Clergy Credibly Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor can be found on the diocesan website at diocesefwsb.org.

If you have reason to believe that a minor is a victim of abuse or neglect, please contact the Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 1-800-800-5556 or local law enforcement. If you or someone you know is the victim of sexual misconduct or abuse perpetrated by a member of the clergy or anyone ministering on behalf of the Church, we are here to help and listen. As part of our ongoing care for victims of sexual misconduct and abuse, the diocese offers pastoral support and assistance. The diocese pledges to listen, investigate, and follow policies and procedures outlined by canon law and the bishop. For diocesan services and assistance please contact the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, Mary Glowaski at 260-399-1458. You can also find contact information for diocesan victim’s assistance on the diocesan website.

Defending Champs Luers, Marian Move Up in IHSAA Reclassification

BY ERIC PEAT

Thanks to achieving a sustained level of success on the field, a pair of diocesan high school athletic programs have proven themselves among the elite in the state of Indiana and have earned an opportunity to compete at an even higher level.

As part of the Indiana High School Athletic Association's new classifications that were announced on Tuesday, April 2, the football program at Bishop Luers High School and the boys soccer program at Marian High School are both moving up from Class 2A to Class 3A in their respective postseason tournaments. The reclassifications, which occurred across the state in football, volleyball, boys and girls basketball, and boys and girls soccer, will go into effect for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years. They are determined by enrollment figures from last fall and by the Tournament Success Factor, a points system the IHSAA uses to award teams that have attained a certain level of postseason success by moving them up to a higher class than the one they were previously in based on their enrollment.

For Bishop Luers and Marian, the reclassification



Facebook.com/MarianHSKnights

Members of the Marian High School boys soccer team pose with a state championship banner during a pep rally on Monday, October 30, celebrating their Class 2A state finals victory.

Blessing of the Bikes

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April 27 at NOON
Free Admission

ALL BIKES WELCOME
Event held rain or shine

- **Food and Beverages**
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"Nothing is ever too much to do for a child."
Mary Virginia Merrick, Founder, National Christ Child Society Candidate for Sainthood

CHRISTCHILDFW.ORG



John Felts

Damiun Jackson, left, and Gio Jimenez receive the state championship trophy after Bishop Luers captured the Class 2A state title by beating North Posey on November 25.

comes on the heels of winning a state championship in the fall of 2023 and presents both programs with a unique chance to make history.

“That was my whole goal when I took over [as head coach in 2013]: to get the program in a position to move up because we were doing well, winning tournament games, and there’s nothing wrong with trying to elevate a program with sustained success to move up a class,” Luers head football coach Kyle Lindsay, a proponent of the Tournament Success Factor, told Today’s Catholic. “I hope in a couple years, we’re talking about moving up another class; that should be the goal.”

Lindsay and company knew their 40-3 win against North Posey in the 2023 Class 2A state championship game would bump them up to 3A, where Bishop Luers will play tournament teams with more depth and size due to larger enrollments. However, the Knights face this challenge on a weekly basis during the regular season as the smallest school in the Summit Athletic Conference and are not shying away from the upcoming test.

“Our returning group of kids wants to be the first Luers team to win a 3A title,” Lindsay said. “These kids are looking forward to the challenge, just like we coaches are.”

This isn’t unfamiliar territory for Bishop Luers football. After winning four straight 2A state titles from 2009-12, the Knights were moved up to 3A with the IHSAA’s introduction of the Tournament Success

Factor and delivered results, capturing three sectional titles and a pair of regional titles in six years. Although they were reclassified back to 2A in 2019 due to enrollment figures, Lindsay said this experience will help his team in the transition back to 3A.

“We’re going into 3A with a sense of confidence,” said Lindsay, who expects a deeper sectional field than the one his teams have faced in 2A. “As a coaching staff, we’ll have what it takes to be successful in 3A. There are no easy wins when you’re wearing a Bishop Luers uniform, whether in conference play or in the tournament. Our focus will be to compete and win a city championship, but ultimately, to put our best product onto the field in the tournament.”

Meanwhile, the Marian boys soccer team is fresh off back-to-back appearances in the Class 2A state championship game. After a 2-1 overtime defeat to Brebeuf Jesuit in the 2022 title game, the Knights broke through with a 4-0 triumph against Evansville Memorial a year later for the state crown. Although that earned the program its first-ever trip to Class 3A, it’s not an entirely new feeling for Knights head coach Ben Householter.

“Honestly, it kind of feels like coming full circle,” Householter said of the move up to 3A. “When I first started coaching, soccer was single class. We played bigger schools in sectionals quite often in the postseason, so I know the challenge ahead. We play mainly larger schools on our schedule

during the regular season. We will definitely have a young team coming in after losing 12 seniors from last year. That will be a good challenge for them – kind of a trial by fire for the young guys – but we’re definitely ready for the challenge.”

Householter has been at the helm of the program for all three of its state championships – Class 1A titles in 2015 and 2016 when there were only two classes, and a 2A title in 2023 when there were three classes. However, he said he will draw from his prior experience coaching soccer in a single-class system when addressing his players to help prepare them for tournament play.

“We won sectionals, we won regionals, we won semistates when there was only one class, and every team we played in sectionals, regionals, and semistate was 2-3 times bigger than our school – and we were still able to compete with them,” Householter said. “I will very much reference this past history.”

Two other diocesan teams are also on the move due to the IHSAA’s reclassifications. Bishop Luers’ girls soccer program is moving up from Class 1A to 2A due to enrollment, while Saint Joseph High School’s girls soccer program is dropping from Class 3A back to 2A after playing up a class since 2019 due to the Tournament Success Factor. The Huskies won three sectional titles and two regional titles during their five-year run in Class 3A.

The IHSAA will announce new sectional groupings for each sport later this spring.

HAPPY RETIREMENT, Michael Shade!



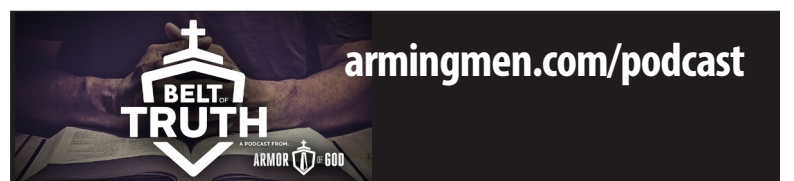
A sincere thank you to Michael Shade for seven years of dedicated service as CEO of the Catholic Community Foundation of Northeast Indiana (CCFNEI).

The CCFNEI family is grateful for Mike’s leadership, vision, and committed service, and we remain thankful for the

tremendous impact he’s made on our local Catholic community. With heartfelt gratitude, we wish him well in this new chapter of retirement and ask all to join us in praying for abundant blessings on Mike and his wife, Mel, in this new season!

You’re invited!

We’d love for you to share your well wishes and congratulatory messages for Mike – please email to Mackenzie Ritchie at mritchie@ccfnei.org.



EVERY CHILD DESERVES A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month
diocesefwsb.org/prevent-child-abuse

Pope to Make 12-Day Trip to Asia in September

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis is planning to make the longest trip of his papacy this coming September, visiting Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Singapore, officials with the Vatican Press Office announced on Friday, April 12. During the 12-day Asian tour, he intends to visit: Jakarta, the Indonesian capital, from September 3-6; Port Moresby and Vanimo, Papua New Guinea, September 6-9; Dili, the capital of Timor-Leste, September 9-11; and Singapore, September 11-13. The last papal trip announced by the Vatican – a visit to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from December 1-3, 2023, for the U.N. climate conference – was canceled three days before Pope Francis was scheduled to leave because he was suffering from bronchitis. The longest foreign trip Pope Francis had previously made was his September 2015 visit to Cuba and the United States.

'Blessed by Cancer' Social Media Evangelist Dies

DETROIT (OSV News) – When Jessica Hanna was diagnosed with cancer while pregnant, she fought to find treatment that would heal her and preserve the life of her unborn child. Months later, she had a healthy baby boy and scans showing no sign of cancer. But tragically, the Michigan mother's cancer soon returned. Through the ups and downs of her illness, the Catholic wife and mother of four shared her story with her nearly 50,000 followers on social media using the powerful handle "blessed by cancer." She died on Saturday, April 6, leaving behind a legacy of pro-life advocacy and an example of a steadfast trust in God, no matter what. On her Instagram page, Hanna frequently shared that she was grateful for the physical healing, but more grateful for the spiritual transformation God had begun in her. "We have to stop thinking earthly. We have to always focus on eternity," she wrote. "Yes, I am blessed by cancer, by suffering, by my cross ... because it is how He found me and made me new. There is no greater blessing than that."

Arizona Court Upholds 1864 Abortion Ban

PHOENIX (OSV News) – The Arizona Supreme Court ruled on Tuesday, April 9, that a 160-year-old near-total abortion ban still on the books in the state is enforceable, a move that could shutter abortion clinics in the state. But, Arizona may

Australian Catholics Mourn Knife Attack Victims



OSV News photo/Patrick Lee, The Catholic Weekly

Parishioners pray and grieve at St. Patrick's Church in Sydney's Bondi neighborhood in the wake of the horrific knife attack at Bondi Junction Westfield shopping center on Saturday, April 13, in which seven people died and a dozen were injured, including a 9-month-old baby. Pope Francis sent a telegram expressing his "spiritual closeness" with Sydney, and "especially those who are now mourning the loss of a loved one."

have the issue of abortion on its ballot in November, which could undo those restrictions. The state's highest court said that following the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 reversal of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision and its related abortion precedents, there was no federal or state law preventing Arizona from enforcing a 19th-century abortion ban – with an exception for the life of a mother – that had become dormant following *Roe*. In a 4-2 decision, the state Supreme Court said the 1864 law, which predated Arizona's statehood, is "enforceable." Earlier in April, a coalition called Arizona for Abortion Access said it had gathered enough

signatures to qualify for a ballot measure to enshrine abortion access in the state constitution. The state's bishops on Wednesday, April 10, called it an "extreme initiative" and not what "Arizona wants or needs. ... We continue to pray that it does not succeed."

Pope Pleads for Military Restraint in the Middle East

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The morning after Iran launched hundreds of drones and missiles at Israel, Pope Francis pleaded with nations to avoid

a further escalation of the violence. "I make a heartfelt appeal for a halt to any action that might fuel a spiral of violence with the risk of dragging the Middle East into an even greater conflict," the pope said on Sunday, April 14, after reciting the Regina Coeli prayer with visitors in St. Peter's Square. According to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, Iran launched 330 exploding drones and missiles at Israeli military facilities late April 13 and early April 14. The vast majority of the weapons were intercepted. Pope Francis told thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square, "I am following in prayer and with concern, also sorrow, the news

that has come in the last few hours about the worsening of the situation in Israel because of the intervention by Iran."

Masked Gunmen Shoot Priest During Mass in Myanmar

MOHNYIN, Myanmar (OSV News) – Unknown assailants gunned down and seriously injured a priest while celebrating morning Mass in Myanmar's conflict-stricken northern Kachin state on Friday, April 12. Two men opened fire at 6:30 a.m. on Father Paul Khwi Shane Aung, 40, the parish priest of St. Patrick's Church in Mohnyin, within the Diocese of Myitkyina, according to sources. "They were wearing black clothes and masks and entered the church on a motorcycle to shoot the priest three times," U Zaw, a local catechist, told UCA News, an independent Catholic news service covering East, South, and Southeast Asia. The motive behind the attack is not yet known. Zaw said the injured priest was rushed to a Mohnyin hospital and was later moved to a hospital in Myitkyina, the state capital. An activist based in Kachin state said anti-social elements are fomenting religious and ethnic conflict as the civil war in military-ruled Myanmar has entered a critical phase. Clergy, pastors, and Church-run institutions are being targeted by the military, which toppled the civilian government in February of 2021, for supporting the rebels.

Pope: Seek Contact with Nature to Change Polluting Lifestyles

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Humanity must have more direct contact with nature to counter the modern lifestyles that are destroying the planet, Pope Francis said. Respecting and loving the earth as well as seeking direct contact with nature "are values that we need so much today as we discover ourselves increasingly powerless before the consequences of irresponsible and short-sighted exploitation of the planet," he told members of the Italian Catholic Movement of Adult Scouts. Meeting with the members, dressed in their scouting uniforms, at the Vatican on Saturday, April 13, the pope said people in modern society are "prisoners of lifestyles and behaviors that are as selfishly deaf to every appeal of common sense as they are tragically self-destructive; insensitive to the cry of a wounded earth, as well as to the voice of so many brothers and sisters unjustly marginalized and excluded from an equitable distribution of goods."



Photos by Georgia Lieb

The combined Bishop Luers/Bishop Dwenger high school band performs on Thursday, April 11, at Bishop Luers.

St. Cecilia Honor Band Program Brings Schools Together

BY GEORGIA LIEB

An array of sounds came from the Bishop Luers High School gymnasium and surrounding classrooms on Thursday, April 11. Band students from Bishop Dwenger, Bishop Luers, and their feeder schools gathered to participate in the third annual St. Cecilia Honor Band program, a collaborative event where students practice music together under the direction of music professionals. All the high school students formed one band, and the middle school students formed another.

Throughout the day, students broke out into sectional groups to practice their specific parts, learning tips from skilled instructors. The day culminated with an evening concert to showcase what they had learned.

Both high schools performed a show for the feeder school students during the program, highlighting the Bishop Luers Pep Band and Bishop Dwenger's Winter Drumline.

The St. Cecilia Honor Band came about as a collaboration between Bishop Luers Band Director Adam Hanke and Bishop Dwenger Band Director Don Cochran four years ago. The two directors attended a professional development day at Bishop Dwenger and began brainstorming ways for their students to collaborate with one another. Each wanted to create a program post-COVID in order to recruit and improve the number of students participating in their band programs. They decided to create a program where their students could combine strengths to form one band and to learn and improve together.

"When these kids get together and they're performing in a large band, it's really



Band directors pause for a photo following the St. Cecilia Honor Band evening performance. From left to right are Don Cochran, Bishop Dwenger Band Director; Scott Humphries, Manchester University Director of Bands; and Adam Hanke, Bishop Luers Band Director.

exciting, because then they can actually hear all the parts," Cochran said. "One of the challenges we run into is that not all the parts are being played when we pull out band literature (in just one high school or middle school band program). By pulling our talents together, the kids could see what it feels like and the excitement behind having all of the musical parts played."

Hanke agreed. "We both have smaller programs, and so to be able to play as a large group gives them that experience," Hanke said. "It also gives the opportunity to bring in a clinician – a great experience to get the kids working with some really good educators."

Scott Humphries served as guest clinician for the event, directing both the middle school and high school bands during their evening performances. He is the Director of Bands at Manchester University, as well Principal Conductor for the Fort Wayne Area Band.

Guest sectional instructors

included Cochran, St. Charles' Angela Bassett, St. Vincent's Nathan Richter, and Queen of Angels' Olivia Leitch.

When asked what his favorite part about St. Cecilia Honor Band was, Hanke said: "I have three big things that have really influenced my life: faith/family, Bishop Luers, and music. Those three things have really changed my life and got me where I am." Hanke said he enjoys "being able to share that and get together with a large group of kids to share that faith. Our job is to give the kids the best experience possible."

Cochran told Today's Catholic his favorite part about the program is "getting feedback from the students – especially the elementary and middle school students – of how exciting it is, and hearing from their teachers that they really enjoyed it. They're wanting to make sure that we can do this on a yearly basis."

Bishop Luers and Bishop Dwenger take turns hosting this event. Next year's St. Cecilia Honor Band will be held at Bishop Dwenger.

WAY OF ST. JOSEPH

WALKING PILGRIMAGE

SATURDAY

04
27

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ST. MICHAEL, from page 1

father attended the school in the 1940s. Weidner has a 30-year career in school administration, 13 of which she has spent at her elementary school alma mater. "Peacefulness" is a word Weidner used to describe the school – a description she said comes from parent visits as well as her own experience as a student.

St. Michael serves children in grades K-8, including a growing Hispanic population, which makes up about 40 percent of the entire student population.

"Our primary goal is to plant the seed of faith in the heart of every future saint that walks our halls," Father Fernando Jimenez, Pastor of St. Michael Catholic Church, told Today's Catholic.

One of the ways the school does that is to offer confession and Eucharistic adoration at the end of the school day on most Fridays throughout the year, a practice they began during the National Eucharistic Revival. "The students look forward to each Friday when they can see their friend, Jesus," Father Jimenez said.

Weidner said preparations for Bishop Rhoades' visit entailed "mainly letting the students know the importance of his role as our diocesan spiritual leader. ... Especially during this Easter time, we feel very blessed that he's visiting," Weidner said.

"Most of the time, we see the bishop when he comes for special occasions – for example, for confirmations," Father Jimenez said. "So, I believe that it is extremely important to provide a time and a space for the bishop and the students to interact on a more personal level."

Weidner added that it's important for the students "to get to know him a little bit and understand how human he is, and that he really does care deeply, not just about the faith but about them also. Once they meet him and talk with him, it's easy to get to know him."

In the classrooms, Bishop Rhoades talked with the students about the topics they were learning in their religion classes – anything from the grades of holy orders to the theological virtues to the Catholic Church's teaching on gender. To the eighth grade students, whom the bishop had just confirmed the week before, Bishop Rhoades gave history of the diocese's formation.

At every class, Bishop Rhoades asked if the students had questions for him. "He is so happy to tell them and let them ask any questions, and I think that is a real strength of his," Weidner said. "We appreciate that very much."

"What's it like being a bishop?" one of the students asked.



Photos by Kasia Balsbaugh

Father Keeton Lockwood, Parochial Vicar at St. Michael Church in Plymouth, reads the Gospel at Mass on Thursday, April 11.**Bishop Rhoades addresses the congregation at the Mass on the feast of St. Stanislaus on Thursday, April 11.**

"I like it most of the time," Bishop Rhoades said with a laugh. He added, more seriously, "It's really serving God – what can be more fulfilling?" He also said his favorite part of being a bishop is celebrating the sacraments, and, as a bishop, he can administer all seven sacraments.

Weidner added that one of the most common questions students ask is about the bishop's "different clothing items." In several classrooms, students asked about the "staff," the "big cross necklace," and the "hat." A commonly asked question was about the bishop's ring. It's

a symbol of his commitment to serving the Church, like a wedding ring, Bishop Rhoades responded.

In almost every classroom, Bishop Rhoades also gave blessings and prayed the Hail Mary in Spanish with the students.

In the older grades, Bishop Rhoades encouraged the students to hold fast to and stand up for their faith, especially if they would be moving to a public high school after attending St. Michael School. His focus on priorities was apparent in his homily during Mass as well.

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades told the inspiring

**Servers, priests, and Bishop Rhoades process out after Mass during Bishop Rhoades' pastoral visit to St. Michael School in Plymouth.**

story of the saint of the day, St. Stanislaus, a Polish bishop who stood up against the immorality of the king and was martyred for this during Mass. "Now we have different priorities in our lives – school is important, church community, family, etc.," Bishop Rhoades told the students. "Number one is always God."

As a token of their appreciation, the students

presented Bishop Rhoades with a spiritual bouquet after Mass. The bouquet was made of paper flowers formed from the traced handprints of the schoolteachers, signed by all the students, and covered with prayers being offered for the bishop. While the bishop has responsibility for his flock, Weidner called prayers for Bishop Rhoades "the responsibilities we have to him."



Fifth grade students volunteer to answer Bishop Rhoades' questions about the different levels of holy orders during his pastoral visit to St. Michael School.



St. Michael
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

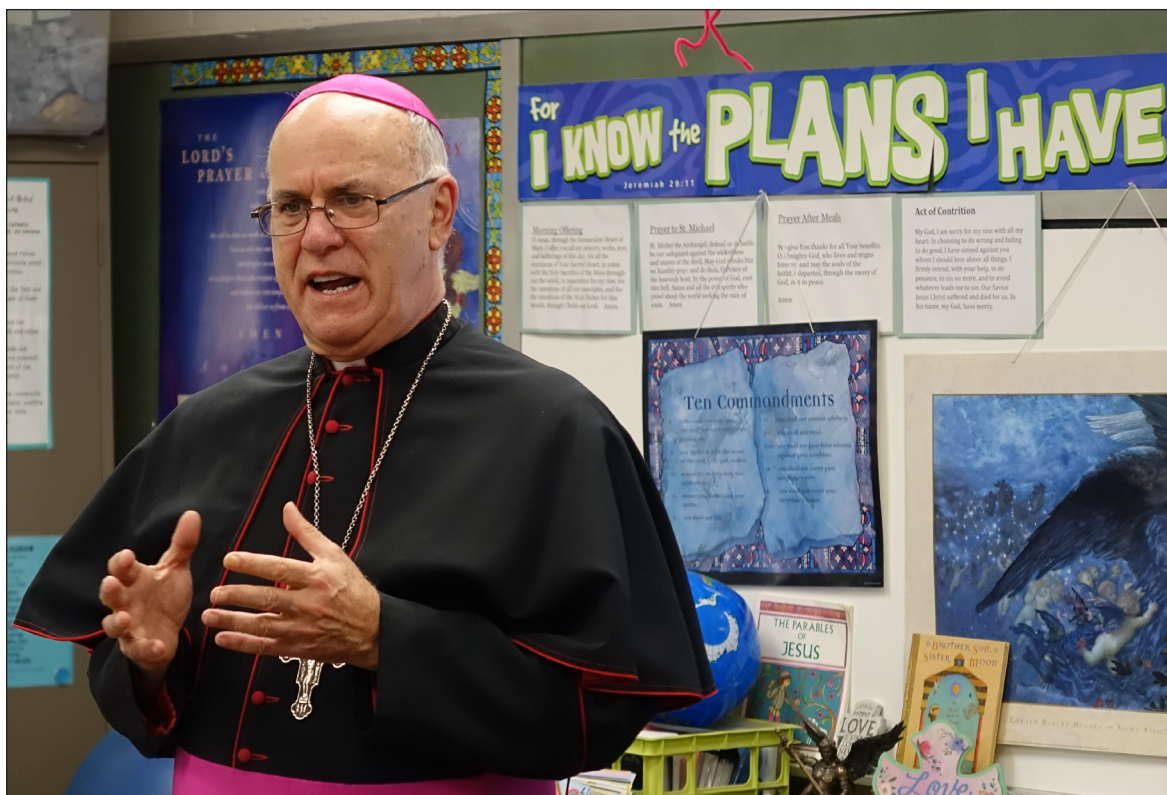
St. Michael School
612 N Center St.,
Plymouth
574-936-4329
saintmichaelschool.org

Year founded: 1861

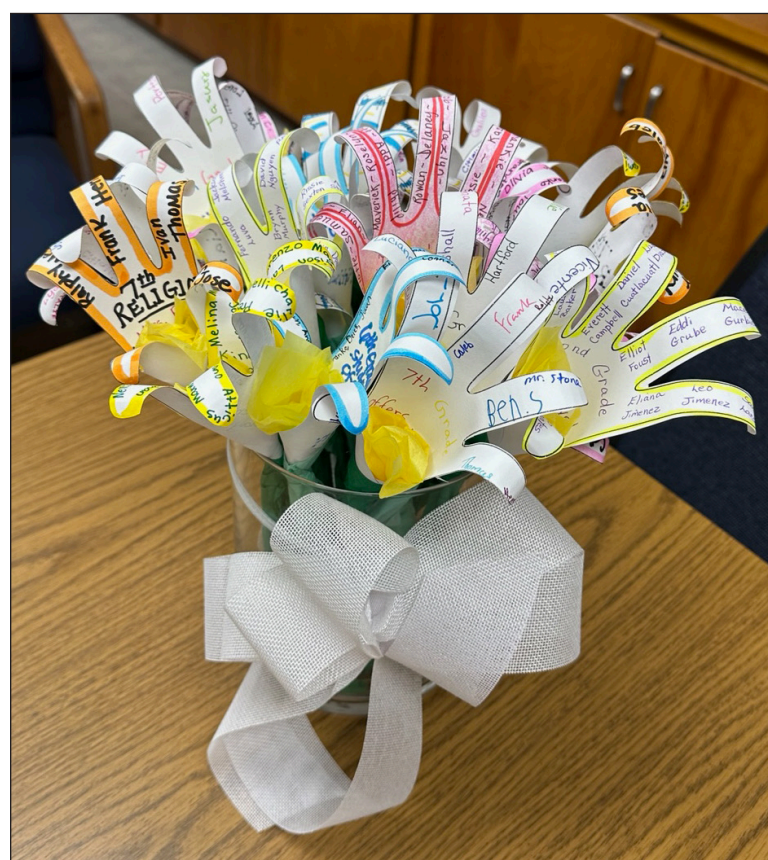
Number of students: 225

Nickname: Crusaders

Principal: Amy Weidner



Bishop Rhoades talks to the third-grade class about different ways to pray during his pastoral visit to St. Michael School in Plymouth on Thursday, April 11.



Provided by Amy Weidner

The spiritual bouquet presented to Bishop Rhoades from St. Michael's School is signed by all teachers and students.



Bishop Rhoades asks the second grade students if they were nervous for their first penances, which happened earlier this school year.



The kindergarten and first grade students prepare to answer Bishop Rhoades' questions about the Resurrection.

'Mayor Henry, May God Give You a Safe Home'

Longtime Fort Wayne Mayor Laid to Rest Following Mass of Christian Burial

BY JOSHUA SCHIPPER

On Friday, April 12, hundreds of people packed the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception to pay their respects to the late Fort Wayne Mayor Thomas C. Henry, who died on Thursday, March 28, at age 72, a little more than a month after revealing a late-stage cancer diagnosis.

Before the Mass of Christian burial, a representative from Governor Eric Holcomb's office posthumously honored the mayor with the title of Sagamore of the Wabash, the Hoosier state's highest honor, which Henry's children accepted on his behalf.

As the Mass began, Monsignor Robert Schulte, Pastor of St. Jude Catholic Church in Fort Wayne, greeted those who were gathered. He recalled that the funeral of Henry's wife, Cindy, occurred 77 days prior, alluding to the symbolism behind the number seven.

"Seven is a biblical number," Monsignor Schulte explained, "a number of completeness and fullness. Tom's life was certainly a life of completeness and fullness. Maybe that's part of God's plan as well. I guess, what I'm saying today is, we need to be thankful – thankful for Tom's life, for his service to our community, for his service as a relative and friend, and for so much that he did for others."

In his homily, Father Bill Kummer, Pastor of St. Joseph – Hessen Cassel, recalled that he, Monsignor Schulte, and Henry "were boys together. ... We knew each other in many ways and experienced all that fun of growing up – of trying



Photos by Joshua Schipper

Mayor Henry lies in state before the Mass of Christian burial at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Friday, April 12. This was the final opportunity for visitation before the mayor's interment at the Catholic Cemetery.

to sort out a life of faith in the world, and then to ultimately follow our chosen and given vocations."

Father Kummer called Henry a "man of community service," saying no one would be elected

mayor five times without having "service in his heart ... may God give you a safe home."

Friends and family of Henry, including Acting Mayor Karl Bandemer and businessman and philanthropist Chuck Surack, served as pallbearers for the procession that followed the Mass. Numerous city employees and citizens of Fort Wayne lined the sidewalks along the procession route to

pay tribute to the mayor before his interment at the Catholic Cemetery on Lake Avenue.

After learning of Henry's death in March, Bishop Rhoades released a statement saying: "I and the Catholic community of Fort Wayne mourn the death of Mayor Tom Henry, a man of faith, who served our city with selfless devotion through his many years of public service. Mayor Henry died on Holy Thursday as we began our three days of remembrance of the passion, death, and resurrection of the Lord. We pray that Mayor Henry, who died peacefully in the Lord, may share in the joy of his resurrection. On behalf of the people of the diocese, I extend condolences to Mayor Henry's family and friends, praying that God will grant them comfort and consolation during these days of mourning."

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I will always remember with thanksgiving Tom's goodness to me and to so many others, especially the needy of our community. May he rest in peace!"

Henry had served as mayor of the Summit City since 2008, having been elected to an unprecedented five terms. His wife, Cindy, 67, died on January 20 after battling pancreatic cancer.

Henry graduated from Fort Wayne Central Catholic High School in 1970 before serving in the U.S. Army Military Police Corp. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology in 1976 from Saint Francis College (now the University of Saint Francis) and a master's degree in business administration from the school in 1981.

Karl Bandemer, 79, who had been serving as Henry's Deputy Mayor since 2013, was sworn in as Fort Wayne's acting mayor on Friday, March 29. The Allen County Democratic Party is scheduled to hold a caucus on Saturday, April 20, to fill Henry's position.



Photos by Joshua Schipper

Mayor Thomas C. Henry's daughter, Beth, and son, Ben, drape the funeral pall over their father's casket as the Mass of Christian Burial begins.

Mayor Tom Remembered By Most Precious Blood Catholic Church Community

We the Most Precious Blood Catholic Church community are deeply saddened at the passing of Mayor Tom Henry, our brother in faith.

Our parish values the rich tradition of service to our church from the Henry family throughout the decades: Margie, the Henry matriarch, and her creativity, creating church banners and other spiritual projects; Jerry Sr. and his positivity and commitment to social justice; and all the faithful of Henry family and their countless examples of support for Most Precious Blood Parish.



In a special way, it is with the same grateful hearts that we remember our brother Tom, who actively served and supported our parish, and who also lived a life of service that extended well beyond our church community. We remember him as a thoughtful man, a man with a ready smile, a man with the joy of Christ in his heart. We have been proud to call him a son of the parish. In fact, that was why at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on March 28th, the stated intention of that liturgy as announced during the Prayer of the Faithful was for Tom Henry.

Yet we also trust that God has not abandoned Tom or his loved ones, as the scripture tells us:

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be." John 14: 1-3

This is our belief about Mayor Tom, for as St. John recorded:

"I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. " "Yes," said the Spirit, "let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them." Revelation 14: 13

For Mayor Tom's family and friends who are hurting from this loss and from the recent passing of Mayor Tom's wife Cindy Henry in January 2024, the Lord offers these words of solace:

"Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted." Matthew 5:4
To all who struggle as a result of the passing of Mayor Tom, know that you are in our thoughts and prayers at this time. Both Tom and Cindy will always be remembered as valued members of Most Precious Blood Church.

God bless.

*Rev. Francis C. Chukwuma (Parish Administrator)
Juan Giron (Parish Council Chairperson)*



Father Bill Kummer, referencing John's Gospel, spoke of the dwelling place that God has prepared for Henry, whom he called a "man of community service."



Pallbearers carried Henry to a hearse prior to a procession to the Catholic Cemetery on Lake Avenue. For the length of the procession, citizens of Fort Wayne lined the sidewalk to pay a final tribute to the longtime mayor.

No, Richard Dawkins, Cultural Christianity Is Not Enough

In a striking turn of events, renowned atheist and evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins recently declared himself a “cultural Christian” during an interview with Rachel S. Johnson of LBC. Dawkins’ declaration was sparked by his reaction to the mayor of London’s decision to celebrate Ramadan with 30,000 lights on Oxford Street rather than Easter.

Well-known for his critical stance on religion, Dawkins expressed dismay at promoting Ramadan over Easter. Surprisingly, he defended the cultural trappings of Christianity in England, which he perceives as a fundamentally Christian nation.

Dawkins’ comments underscore a significant but often overlooked conversation in the West. While Dawkins does not embrace Christianity’s spiritual tenets, his appreciation for its cultural and moral contributions to society raises an intriguing paradox: Can the values and achievements attributed to Christianity in the West be preserved without genuine belief?

This question is particularly relevant for Catholics and the broader Christian community. It compels us to reflect on the depth of our commitment to our faith and its role in shaping our civilization. Cultural Christianity, such as Dawkins identifies with, appreciates the aesthetic and moral fruits

of the faith without embracing its heart – the belief that Jesus Christ is Lord and that a personal relationship with Him matters. However, preserving Western values and achievements that Christianity has influenced – such as human dignity, moral responsibility, and the pursuit of the common good – requires more than a superficial attachment to its traditions and moral outlook.

Christianity is a radical thing. The Gospel demands transformation, calling for personal conversion and a lived relationship with God. This transformation extends beyond individual lives, influencing societies through acts of charity, the pursuit of justice, and the cultivation of peace. Historical evidence abounds of the pivotal role Christianity has played in the development of Western institutions, including the concept of human rights, the foundation of hospitals and universities, and significant contributions to art, science, and philosophy. These contributions were not merely the result of a cultural identity but flowed directly from belief in the Christian understanding of the world and our place in it.

Dawkins’ reflections on the importance of Christianity, even as a cultural marker, illustrate the void that would be left should genuine belief continue to wane. The cultural and ethical framework Christianity provides cannot be sustained in



THINGS CONTEMPLATED

FATHER PATRICK BRISCOE

perpetuity without the nourishment of sincere faith. A culture detached from its spiritual roots gradually loses its vitality, becoming unable to defend the very values it cherishes against the erosive forces of nihilism and moral relativism.

The challenge for Christians, then, is not merely to uphold a cultural identity but to live authentically according to the teachings of Christ. This requires a fundamental commitment to evangelization. We must continually enrich our understanding of the faith and reach out to others to invite conversions.

Cultural Christianity is insufficient for the preservation of the West’s greatest values and achievements. Pope Benedict XVI once said, “The conviction that there is a Creator God is what gave rise to the idea of human rights, the idea of the equality of all people before the law, the recognition of the inviolability of human dignity in every single person, and the awareness of people’s respon-

BRISCOE, page 13

Going After the Lost Sheep of Generation Z

Good Shepherd Sunday, held this year on April 21, is a poignant reminder of one of the Church’s sacred duties: to guide and nurture young people in their spiritual journey. This Sunday, a special celebration commemorating Our Lord’s unwavering guidance and protection prompts us to examine the evolving spiritual landscape of Generation Z, particularly in light of recent findings on religious observance trends. A groundbreaking survey published on Thursday, April 4, by the Survey Center on American Life unveils a startling reversal in the sexual dynamics of religious disaffiliation, with young women leaving religious communities in unprecedented numbers. This shift challenges long-held assumptions and signals a profound cultural and spiritual disconnection that demands our urgent attention and action.

While 71 percent of baby boomers regularly attended religious services as teenagers, that figure has plummeted to 52 percent among Gen Z. What’s even more striking is the difference in disaffiliation between men and women in Gen Z. Historically, men have been more likely to distance themselves from the exercise of religion and religious affiliation. Yet, the current generation of Gen Z adults presents a new pattern: 54 percent of those who have disaffiliated are women. This reversal is

OUR SUNDAY VISITOR EDITORIAL

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emblematic of deeper undercurrents of change, influenced significantly by issues prompted by contemporary feminism, including sexual equality and a perceived cultural mismatch between conservative religious doctrines and the progressive values many young women hold today.

Today, 61 percent of Gen Z women identify as feminists, reflecting a growing dissonance with institutions perceived to uphold sexual inequality. Nearly two-thirds believe that Christian denominations do not treat men and women equally, revealing a critical gap between Catholic teaching and the lived experiences and expectations of young women.

But modern feminism has been on the rise for decades. So, what has led to an increasing disaffiliation of Gen Z women? It seems that broader cultural shifts, with a significant rise in young women identifying as liberal since 2015 and issues such as abortion rights and LGBTQ+ identities, are becoming central to their departure from the Church. In fact, by

OSV BOARD, page 13

Only Jesus, the Good Shepherd, Can Lead Us to Eternal Life



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

Fourth Sunday of Easter

The Acts of the Apostles again is the source of a weekend’s first reading during the Easter season. Peter, once more the spokesman for the apostles, is filled with the Holy Spirit. He is not speaking on his own.

In this story, Peter restores a person unable to walk to wholeness, declaring that this miraculous event came not as the result of his own power, or of any earthly power, but rather through the power of Jesus.

Continuing, Peter makes it clear that this Jesus, the source of Peter’s power, is indeed the Jesus who was crucified on

Calvary, the Savior and the Son of God. Jesus is the gateway to eternal life itself, the single source of God’s favor and everlasting life.

The First Epistle of John provides the second reading. These three epistles, given the name of John the Apostle, are alike, and splendid, in their superb use of language.

This reading declares that true believers are “children of God.” It is a powerful concept, meaning that through Jesus, and in Jesus, believers become much more than merely creatures of God. They truly are God’s children.

The Scriptures have many titles and names for God. He is the master, the creator, the king, and the almighty. In this reading, God is the Father. The title conveys all that the relationship between a child and an earthly father suggests.

The Gospel reading is a passage from St. John in which Jesus is described as the Good Shepherd. This title, occurring elsewhere in the New Testament, with many echoes

of the Old Testament, offers valuable lessons.

In the Greek, the language of the Gospel, “good” means “ideal.” Jesus is the perfect shepherd. Thus, Jesus not only leads the sheep but risks everything, even life itself, for the sheep. The image has overtones of the Lord’s sacrificial death on Calvary.

Another lesson is that we are sheep. Sheep are not aggressive. They are not predators. They are shy, easily the prey of vicious enemies that capitalize on the sheep’s innocence and vulnerability. Humans resemble sheep, as humans unsuspectingly so often are exposed to the dangers of sin and to the meanness of sinful persons. The Lord protects us.

“Sheep not of this fold” refers to enemies, not just strangers, who lie in waiting for the weak.

In the agrarian world of that day’s Israel, Jesus used images familiar to everyone, such as shepherds and sheep. He wanted all to understand and to

know God, God’s mercy, God’s love, and the potential of all to live in this love.

Reflection

For weeks, the Church has celebrated the Resurrection, and it still celebrates the Lord’s risen life this weekend.

In these readings, the Church reminds us that the Resurrection was not just an event that came and went. Instead, it is with us now. How? Peter brought people to God. He brought God’s life-giving power to them. His successors continue in this wondrous exchange.

In our inevitable limitations, we humans everlastingly ignore our own vulnerability and inflate our strengths. We are at the mercy of death-dealing and devious forces, some with human faces. Some come from within us. We must admit these realities.

Jesus is our Good Shepherd, ready to sacrifice earthly life itself to protect us from death.

We need the Lord. Without the Lord, we risk eternal death,

helpless before our enemies. He alone guides us to peace and to life.

The Lord, however, does not invade our hearts. We are free to choose for ourselves, in a dramatic personal selection of life in Christ or eternal death.

We must convert and commit. Essential to eternal life is a total and absolute commitment to God, through Jesus.

It is this simple, this basic.

READINGS

Sunday: Acts 4:8-12; Psalms 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 28-29; 1 John 3:1-2; John 10:11-18

Monday: Acts 11:1-18; Psalms 42:2-3; 43:3-4; John 10:1-10

Tuesday: Acts 11:19-26; Psalms 87:1-7; John 10:22-30

Wednesday: Acts 12:24 – 13:5a; Psalms 67:2-3, 5-6, 8; John 12:44-50

Thursday: 1 Peter 5:5b-14; Psalms 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17; Mark 16:15-20

Friday: Acts 13:26-33; Psalms 2:6-11; John 14:1-6

Saturday: Acts 13:44-52; Psalms 98:1-4; John 14:7-14

He Saw the Cloths and Believed: Faith and the Shroud of Turin

As we continue in the Easter season, we can reflect back on the Gospel for Easter Sunday. It is from St. John's account of Easter morning (Jn 20:1-9). We are told that Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb very early in the morning while it is still dark. She has come to anoint the body of the Lord, which had been buried in haste because of the onset of the Passover. She spies the great stone rolled back and assumes that the body has been stolen. So, she runs immediately to Simon Peter and the other disciples: "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put Him." She doesn't yet believe in the Resurrection, for she is operating still within a conventional framework.

So, the two disciples, Peter and John, make a mad dash toward the tomb, the younger John outpacing the older Peter. What an odd detail, by the way – so peculiar in fact, that it led the novelist Graham Greene to accept the historicity of the account. Upon coming to the open tomb, John looks in and sees "the burial cloths." Then Peter arrives and spies the same cloths, as well as the cloth that had covered His head "rolled up in a separate place." Have you ever wondered why there is such an emphasis on the burial cloths? The most obvious reason is that their presence is peculiar. If the body had been stolen, why would the thieves have bothered taking the elaborately wound cloths off, and why in the world would they have taken the time and effort to fold the head cloth up so carefully?

But might they also be mentioned so prominently because they were treasured by the early Church? And might at least the principal cloth exist to this day? I'm speaking, of course, of the famous Shroud of Turin, which for centuries has been revered as a relic of the Crucifixion. I had a chance to see the shroud in 2010, when I was a visit-

ing scholar in Rome and the cloth was exposed briefly for public display. It is remarkably long – long enough indeed to have covered a body front and back. On it can be seen, plainly enough, rust-colored markings that suggest the frontal and dorsal sides of a man about 30 years of age. Marks of violence can be seen on Him, wounds from whipping and, quite clearly, from crucifixion – great gashes in the wrists and feet, as well as a gaping wound in the side of the torso.

However, the most remarkable feature of the shroud was revealed only in 1898, when it was photographed for the first time. When the photographer, a man named Secondo Pia, developed the film, he noticed that the negative of the photo revealed an exquisitely detailed depiction of the man of the shroud, anatomically exact to a degree that no artist could have produced. So, what we see of the shroud, he concluded, is itself a kind of photographic negative. And when scientists pored over the detailed version, what they saw took their breath away. Not only was the anatomy perfectly correct, but the details of the wounds were telling, corresponding to the very sort of scourges that ancient Romans used. The "crown" of thorns was more of a cap, and the wound in the side gave evidence of both blood and pericardial fluid: the blood and water of which St. John spoke. Furthermore, traces of coins, bearing the inscription of Pontius Pilate, could be seen covering the eyelids. Also, seeds and pollen from the Middle East were found within the strands of the fabric.

How was the image formed? Here, the scientists were truly stumped, for absolutely no trace of paint or pigment could be found, and the marks did not work their way down into the fabric but colored only the very surface of the shroud. The closest they could come to naming it accurately was to refer to it as a "scorch," something caused by an intense



WORD ON FIRE

BISHOP ROBERT BARRON

burst of radiation – which would furthermore explain the photographic negative quality of the image.

What in nature would produce such a phenomenon? Nothing that we know. Does it indicate the fact of the Resurrection, when in a great burst of light and energy, the body of Jesus was brought back to life? The extraordinary and mysterious Shroud of Turin speaks to us a great Easter truth – namely, that at the heart of Christianity stands not a myth or a legend or a symbol but a fact, the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It was this historical truth that sent the first Christians careering around the world to announce the "Gospel," which means "good news." They were not trading in philosophical abstractions or spiritual musings; rather, they were grabbing their interlocutors by the shoulders and telling them that something had happened.

When St. John entered the tomb and saw the burial cloths, he "saw and believed." There was something about those wrappings that convinced him. I wonder whether the same thing is true today in our hyper-skeptical age. We, too, can see the cloth in which Jesus' body was wrapped, and we understand it far more thoroughly than St. John ever could have.

Does it cause us to "see and believe?"

Bishop Robert Barron is the Bishop of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, and the Founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

BRISCOE, from page 12

sibility for their actions." Believing in God, or not, has consequences.

As Dawkins inadvertently highlights, the beauty, ethics, and institutions shaped by Christianity are not merely historical artifacts to be admired but are manifestations of faith that will only continue to offer meaning and direction if people believe it to be true.

Father Patrick Briscoe is Editor of Our Sunday Visitor.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for April 21, 2024

John 10:11-18

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Easter Cycle B: Good Shepherd Sunday. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

GOOD	SHEPHERD	LAYS DOWN
HIRED	SEES A WOLF	COMING
LEAVES	RUNS AWAY	SCATTERS
KNOW ME	FATHER	OTHER
BELONG	THIS FOLD	I MUST
IN ORDER	AGAIN	NO ONE
TAKES IT	POWER	COMMAND

SEES A WOLF

```

I M U S T L B E L O N G
L A F E D M E M W O N K
A N G V T A K E S I T D
Y A W A S N U R M J O R
S N P E I E P O W E R E
D I R L G N C D E R I H
O L E W K O O T H E R P
W Y H O M O O R A L L E
N T T M Y N X D D M M H
E R A F L O W A S E E S
H N F G S C A T T E R S
D L O F S I H T C O M P
    
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OSV BOARD, from page 12

some estimates, as many as 3 in 10 Gen Z women identify with a sexual identity as something other than "straight." This trend, more recent than the rise in modern feminism, is alarming. Why do our young women not realize the beauty of their femininity? Why are young women more likely to identify as men than young men are to identify as women?

These trends have profound implications for the Catholic Church. The departure of young women from religion poses a unique challenge, given the historically central role of women in community building and in nurturing the faith of future generations. We must ask: How can the Church celebrate the unique contributions Gen Z women will bring to the Church?

The statistics and stories emerging from the experiences of young women call for a comprehensive reassessment of how we engage with and support our youth. They highlight a pressing need for resources and approaches that understand the values and experiences of young people today and draw them to a spiritual home that offers the Truth, the healing balm of the Gospel.

This call to action is not just about stemming the tide of disaffiliation but about imitating the Good Shepherd to call young people out of the crisis consuming their generation. Consider that while 36 percent

of baby boomers felt lonely or isolated often as teens, that number has skyrocketed to 61 percent among Gen Z teens. Such remarkable levels of loneliness demonstrate the profound need for community among our young people.

As Pope Francis preached this year on the feast of Mary, the Mother of God, "Every society needs to accept the gift that is woman, every woman: to respect, defend, and esteem women, in the knowledge that whosoever harms a single woman profanes God, who was 'born of a woman.'" As we move forward, let us draw inspiration from the Good Shepherd, who leaves the 99 to seek out the one. In doing so, we must find new ways to engage and embrace Gen Z women so that they can find and claim the place that is rightly theirs in the fold. By doing so, we can ensure that the Church remains a nurturing force in the lives of future generations, guiding them not away from but closer to the flock.

The changing religious landscape among Gen Z, particularly the significant shift in the religious observance of young women, is an opportunity for reflection and action. It is a chance for the Church to reaffirm its esteem for what Pope St. John Paul II rightly dubbed the "feminine genius."

The Our Sunday Visitor Editorial Board is comprised of Father Patrick Briscoe, Gretchen R. Crowe, Matthew Kirby, Scott P. Richert, and York Young.

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For More Than 100 Years, Indiana Knights Have Supported At-Risk Youths

BY CLAIRE KENNEY

For more than 100 years, Knights of Columbus councils and their members throughout Indiana have helped Gibault Children's Services foster a faith-fueled and fulfilling lifestyle for at-risk youths. Since founding the mental health clinic in 1921, the Indiana Knights have supported Gibault as their team has worked alongside 10,000 children and their families through the years.

Originally founded as a clinic to help wayward boys, Gibault now works with children, teens, and adult men and women. Through counseling and rehabilitation services both in a residential-based format and a community-based format, Gibault services youths with mild to severe emotional disturbances and those with aggressive and oppositional behaviors.

Gibault also serves youths who are struggling with substance abuse issues, victims, and perpetrators who exhibit sexually harmful or reactive behavior, those with learning disabilities, children who have been diagnosed as being on the Autism spectrum, and youths struggling with a variety of clinical issues.

"Our biggest supporters are the Indiana Knights of Columbus," explained Melissa Reed, Gibault's Director of Fund Development, "and we are their number one charity."

Today, Gibault has grown to include two campuses – the original location in Terre Haute and one now in Schererville. The Knights are highly involved in both via a variety of activities and donations.

"The Knights come to our



Photos from Gibault Children's Services' Facebook Page

campuses and treat our children to chicken fries, cornhole tournaments, fishing rodeos, and provide Christmas gifts and parties," Reed told Today's Catholic.

These visits help the youth understand their value.

"Visits from the Knights and their families to our campuses ensure our kids feel special, because they know the Knights visit because they care," Reed said.

State Deputy for the Indiana Knights of Columbus, Scott Schutte, has witnessed how the work of the Knights impacts the youths at Gibault.

"This gives the children a sense that there is a larger community supporting them," Schutte said.

Gibault was originally slated to open in 1914. However, because of the outbreak of World War I, the founding was delayed.

"The Knights of Columbus in Indiana were requested by the bishops to create a home for wayward boys in 1914," Schutte told Today's Catholic. "With World War I intervening, the Knights opened the facility in 1921."

At a community level, Gibault offers outpatient counseling services, diagnostic and evaluation services, risk assessment and treatment, as well as supervised visitation. The approach toward tending the needs of young residents is more holistic and focuses on the comprehensive effects of trauma. Children who are living at Gibault as residents require a completely immersive experience.

Additionally, Gibault has an accredited academic program with intramural sports and recreational activities to further enhance a student's experience. The educational experience offers a low student-to-teacher ratio, structured classroom setting, day treatment, a year-round calendar, and Title 1 services. While a majority of the youths served at Gibault come from the Hoosier State, "we also receive students from outside of Indiana – Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and Iowa primarily," Schutte said.

Indiana Knight and Gibault Board Member Paul Zielinski told Today's Catholic he has many fond memories getting to know Gibault's youths.

"The annual Knights of Columbus Envoy Conference in September of 2012 was my first opportunity to talk with some of the children," Zielinski said. "The conference included a tour of a dormitory area, and the attendees were encouraged to engage with the children by playing board games in their common areas."

In early 2023, Gibault Children's Services in Terre Haute acquired the Campagna Academy in Schererville, giving Gibault the ability to enhance the lives of even more at-risk youths, including those requiring a residential setting.

"With this acquisition, we are expanding the number of rooms to provide services to more children," Schutte said.

Several facilities on Gibault's original campus have been funded by the Knights.

"Because of the love and generosity of the Indiana Knights, we can provide many extra amenities to the children we serve," Reed said. "We have an ice cream parlor, movie theater, splash pad, and arcade on our Terre Haute campus, which were all funded by the Knights."

Charitable donations from the Knights are collected through a variety of Knights' initiatives and fundraising efforts.

"The Knights host fundraisers in their own communities to benefit our children and invite our youth to come to their council halls for Halloween parties and spaghetti luncheons," Reed said.

The Knights' most recent fundraising appeal went toward Gibault's new Campagna Campus, Zielinski said, noting that the money went "to finish up all the renovations in the living units and to renovate the tennis courts into pickleball courts" on the new campus.

And certainly, he said, this appeal will not be the last.

"I expect the Indiana Knights of Columbus will continue to support Gibault as they have for more than 100 years," Zielinski said, most notably through "prayer, donations, and support" – of which, "prayer is most important," he added. "The children, residents, and staff need our prayers more than ever."

Officials with Gibault said the organization plans to continue to cultivate its relationship with the Knights to facilitate opportunities for the children Gibault works to support.

"The love and support of our Indiana Knights will allow us to continue to thrive and serve more children, hopefully [another] 103 years," Reed said. "We will continue to nurture our partnership so the children at Gibault will always know there is a community of people who care about them." She added, "The Knights are instrumental in helping us to provide life-changing opportunities for children, adults, families, and communities with their gifts of time, talent, and treasure."



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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.

Sacred Heart Cemetery Spring Clean Up

SOUTH BEND – The Sacred Heart Cemetery (on the corner of Western Avenue and Pine Road) will conduct the spring cleanup from Monday, April 22, through Saturday, April 27. Please have all fall and Christmas decorations removed from the graves by this time. Contact Patrick Nowak at 574-287-7125 or narohaz@aol.com

Christ Child Society of South Bend Informational Coffee

MISHAWAKA – The Christ Child Society of South Bend will have an informational coffee on Wednesday, April 24, from 9:30-11 a.m. at the clothing center, 2366 Miracle Lane. Would you like to learn more about CCS and tour the Clothing Center? Are you interested in hearing about volunteer activities? Consider joining this all-volunteer organization focused on making the lives of St. Joseph County children bright and hopeful. There are no membership requirements other than annual dues. For more information, contact Vickie Sleevi at 574-288-6028 or visit christchildsb.org.

Fish Fry at St. John, New Haven

NEW HAVEN – St. John the Baptist, 943 Powers St., will have a fish fry, sponsored by the Holy Name Society, on Friday, April 26, from 4-7 p.m. This fish fry is dine-in or drive-through. The cost is \$12 for adults and \$7 for children (5-12). Along with fish, dinners include potato wedges, coleslaw, applesauce, and cookies.

St. Mary Garage Sale and Pork Burger Sale

AVILLA – St. Mary Parish, 228 N. Main St., will have a garage sale and pork burger sale on Saturday, April 27, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, April 28, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Find pork purgers outside the church and the garage sale

inside the school gymnasium. \$2 bag sale on Sunday. For information, contact Henrietta Harris at 260-443-4749 or youngevitymom@yahoo.com.

Way of St. Joseph Pilgrimage

MISHAWAKA – Honor St. Joseph by participating in a family-friendly walking pilgrimage from St. Joseph Church, 220 West 4th St. in Mishawaka, to St. Joseph Church, 711 E. Colfax Ave. in South Bend, on Saturday, April 27. The Way of St. Joseph will begin at 9 a.m. at St. Joseph Church, Mishawaka, wind its way along the River Walk, and end up at St. Joseph Church in South Bend. There will be three other on-ramps along the way for families for whom the entire pilgrim-

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Pamela Dornqast, 76, Queen of Peace

Patrick Adamo, 67, St. Joseph

Michael Larimer, 78, St. Joseph

Richard LeMere, 92, St. Joseph

David Selum, 57, St. Joseph

Christine Walsh, 79, St. Joseph

South Bend

Harry Jozwiak, 84, Cathedral of St. Matthew

Emily Kopec, 92, Cathedral of St. Matthew

Send obituaries to obituaries@diocesefwsb.org.

age would be too taxing. The event will end with a prayer service, food, and fellowship in the fenced-in parking lot and playground at St. Joseph Parish. The event is free, but registration is strongly recommended. For more information and to register, visit: diocesefwsb.org/joseph-pilgrimage.

SUBMIT EVENTS at
TodaysCatholic.org/event

Liturgical Music Director St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel Parish

Qualifications and Education Requirements

Candidate should be a practicing Catholic in good standing with prior experience leading a music ministry. Candidate should have a Bachelor's Degree in music or related field with a working knowledge in Catholic liturgy. Candidate should have competency in both organ and piano.

Role and Responsibilities

- Provide music for all Masses.
- Provide music for school Masses, funerals, and other special Masses as may occur.
- Recruit and train cantors, choir members, and other musicians as needed.
- Have first right to funerals, weddings, and other special Masses and Liturgies.
- Prepare "Liturgy Guides" when needed, keeping copyright requirements.
- Facilitate purchase and maintenance of missalettes, hymnals, and other worship aids.
- Meet regularly with pastor and other ministers as needed to coordinate liturgies.
- Maintain Liturgical Calendar in accordance with all church directives.
- Support the school in planning and implementing liturgical music practices.
- Facilitate the maintenance and repair of all musical equipment and sound system(s).
- Provide input for annual budget.
- As a member of the pastoral staff, attend meetings as member and colleague.

To apply, visit diocesefwsb.org/careers.

St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE of FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

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.

Responsibilities include but not limited to leading children's vacation bible school (VBS), youth ministry, and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) programs. In addition, this person will assist with parish communications, including managing the Church's website and social media account.

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
 6941 E. Waco Dr., Syracuse, IN 46567
 574- 457-8176 260-820-2691
 Email St. Martin Church: stmartinchurch@yahoo.com

Deadline for Applications is Friday, May 3, 2024.

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At St. Mary in Geneva, 'We Work as a Team'

BY LISA KOCHANOWSKI

Among the beautiful and serene landscape of Geneva, on the southeastern edge of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, is St. Mary of the Presentation Catholic Church. Led by pastor Father Jonathan Agbedo, the quaint church was founded in 1856 with visiting priests celebrating Mass. In 1878, Father Joseph Uphaus began holding regular Masses for 19 Catholic families, most of whom were Irish settlers, some who generously donated land for the construction of a new church in 1880.

"However, as fate will have it, in October of 1881, the newly erected church was razed down by fire," Father Agbedo told *Today's Catholic*. "Nevertheless, in 1882, the congregation began the rebuilding of their burnt church, and with the help of their friends, the work was completed in 1883. This time around, it was built with bricks. But painfully again, on January 2, 1941, fire again struck St. Mary's Church, and because it was rebuilt with bricks, the rate of damage was not as severe as the first fire incident, and that was why they were able to rebuild it almost immediately."

"Presently," Father Agbedo said, "the number of registered families at St. Mary of the Presentation Church are about 31 families, though we have about 40 (or more) other families from nearby parishes who regularly worship with us on Saturdays and Sundays, and a few of them attend our weekday masses also."

The demographic of the community is mostly older, retired individuals who have been longstanding members of the congregation. They have seen an increase in young families, with visitors from the nearby town of Portland and communities across the border in Ohio.

"Since there are no industries or other related establishments to readily provide employment for the youths, all our youths migrated to the cities for greener pastures," Father Agbedo said.

According to Father Agbedo, the mission of the parish – and of the wider Church – is to proclaim the Good News of Our Lord Jesus Christ to as many people as possible both within and outside of the church. They strive to build a community where people live for one another by carrying out charitable services to God through acts of service.

The parish and congregation have many unique characteristics, with a key one being that nearly all parish members have known one another from early childhood, through high school, to adulthood.

"The church is seen as a



Photos provided by St. Mary of the Presentation Parish



family church, and everyone makes selfless sacrifices to keep the church flourishing," Father Agbedo said. "There are about 31 registered families now in the church, but the church hosts more than 70 families every weekend, as there are people from other nearby parishes who prefer worshipping in our church on weekends and during festivities (Christmas, Easter, etc.)," said Father Agbedo. "Our community comprises few Catholics who live nearby, Amish families, and some

free thinkers. Not minding the differences in our profession of faith, we live happily and friendly here. Here is the most peaceful community in the state of Indiana, though a remote area."

Though small in size, the parish community offers a variety of groups and activities in which the faithful can participate.

"Apart from Sunday and weekday Masses, we have introduced Eucharistic adoration which is held every Friday,"

PARISH SPOTLIGHT

St. Mary of the Presentation
5790 E. 1100 S., Geneva
Founded: 1883
Phone: 260-997-6558
Website: stmarysgeneva.org
Pastor:
Father Jonathan Agbedo
Masses:
Saturday – 5 p.m.
Sunday – 9 a.m.
Parish population: 31 families

revival. We have a series of events on the subject matter, where everyone should participate. We have our summer cookout, which brings us together to share common meals and play different games and felicitate with one another."

Father Agbedo hopes all parishioners gain a deeper knowledge of God's love and grows in their faith. He wants them to be able to share Christ's Good News with people around them and have a faith that inspires them to live charitable lives.

Between 2022 and 2023, the parish carried out renovations to both the church and the rectory.

"We work as a team," Father Agbedo said of the parish's greatest strengths. "We are small in number but mighty in carrying out good works. We live and work as a family."



Father Agbedo said, "We have been hosting periodic and seasonal retreats; we have a women's sodality, and we are about to begin Bible studies and marriage preparation classes, as we have two of our newly registered members getting documented for marriage preparation."

Also, Father Agbedo said, "This is the year of Eucharistic

