

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Volume 98 No. 41

TODAYSCATHOLIC.org

Bishop Visits St. Adalbert School

History, Hispanic Culture Sets South Bend Grade School Apart



Kasia Balsbaugh

Bishop Rhoades answers questions from students at St. Adalbert Catholic School on Friday, November 22.

BY KASIA BALSBAUGH

Though Jenni Crain wasn't expecting her 4-year-old daughter to be able to answer the question, "Who's coming to our school this week?" her daughter did indeed know: "Bishop Rhoades," the young girl said. When asked who Bishop Rhoades was, Crain's daughter answered, "He's the nice man in the pink hat, and he loves us."

Crain, the principal of St. Adalbert Catholic School in South Bend, saw that answer as a confirmation of the strength of the school's pre-K team – and a good sign for the future.

"It's so important that a shepherd knows their sheep, but it's so important that the sheep know that they're known,"

Crain told Today's Catholic.

Bishop Rhoades visited St. Adalbert Catholic School on Friday, November 22, the feast of St. Cecilia, which was commemorated in the morning Mass. Referring to legends about St. Cecilia's life, Bishop Rhoades said in his homily, "When she got married, it says that she sang a song to the Lord in her heart. That's why she's the patron saint of music. ... When we sing at Mass, we should sing with our voices, right? But also in our hearts."

Bishop Rhoades ended his homily by saying, "Martyrs inspire us to be courageous in our faith, to not be afraid, to live our faith, to praise God, to worship God – not only with our lips but by singing, praying out loud, like St. Cecilia, also with our hearts and by the

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South Bend

Phone: 574-288-6645

Founded: 1910

Enrollment: 231 students

Nickname: Eagles

Principal: Jenni Crain

stadalbertschool.org

way we live – by obeying God's commandments, by loving one another."

During his classroom visits later that morning, Bishop Rhoades talked with the students about the sacraments and the Ten Commandments, but he also spoke about the life of faith more personally. To a student who asked, "What made you be in love with God?" Bishop Rhoades explained how his mom taught him how to pray. "Jesus became my best friend," Bishop Rhoades said. "And still is," he added, encouraging the students to get to know Jesus through praying, talking to Him, and reading about Him.

The students also urged Bishop Rhoades to talk about

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The Hopeful Anticipation of the Coming of Christ

Reflection for the First Sunday of Advent

BY FATHER TYRELL J. ALLES, OSB

“Advent,” from the Latin “*adventus*,” means “coming” or “presence.” In the language of the ancient world, it meant the arrival or the visit of the king or emperor to a province. For the Church, the liturgical season of Advent, marked by a spirit of expectation, has a two-fold character.

Chronologically, the first is the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The second is His glorious return at the end of time. However, liturgically, first, we reflect on His Second Coming. The liturgical readings of this time are apocalyptic in nature, and so we reflect on the Old Testament’s Messianic prophecies and their fulfillment in Jesus at His first coming, His incarnation. Therefore, Advent invites us to look back in view of looking forward to the coming and the presence of Christ among us.

The opening prayer on the first Sunday of Advent, which speaks of the Lord’s coming, sets the tone for this season. “Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run for to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at His coming, so that, gathered at His right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom.” The Old Testament reading from Jeremiah’s prophecy of a “righteous branch” springing up for David has messianic overtones (Jer 33:15). This metaphor drawn from the plant world is an important symbol of hope. Just as saplings grow out of dead stumps, even a dead dynasty can be restored. He declares: “In those days Judah shall be saved and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; this is the name they shall call her: ‘The Lord our justice.’” (Jer 33:16). In this oracle, Jeremiah points to the failure of political leadership to render justice and righteousness in the community, and he announces God’s intention to provide leaders who will rightly render the affairs of the people and will lead them in their worship of the Lord. “The Lord our justice” is the name of the righteous king who is to come. People who go by the name “the Lord our justice” understand themselves to be committed to all those ways God has defined as living in right relationship with God and neighbour. Such people are a sign of God’s love, of His justice, which is already present and active in history but is not yet completely fulfilled and must therefore always be



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awaited, invoked, and sought with patience and courage. Jesus, the promised righteous branch, will proclaim a new vision of justice and righteousness.

St. Paul’s Thessalonian correspondence contains much teaching or a vibrant hope about the Second Coming of Our Lord, the *Parousia*. Through Paul’s preaching of the Gospel, God has called and chosen the Thessalonians to be members of the sanctified community that is the Church. God’s will for them, then, is their sanctification. As members of the sanctified community that has received the gift of the Spirit, they must increase and abound in love and live their lives in holiness so that they can stand blameless before the Lord on the day of the *Parousia*, the Second Coming of Our Lord (cf. 1 Thes 3:12-13). St. Paul encourages the Thessalonians: “May the Lord increase you and make you overflow with love. May He strengthen your hearts.” We, too, are encouraged to live a life of love and holiness in preparation for the Lord’s coming among us.

The reading from the Gospel of Luke focuses on the Second Coming of Our Lord. Jesus speaks of cosmic disturbances – the signs in the sun, moon, and stars, the roar of the sea – to speak of His Second Coming.

He will come in power so great that it will shake the heavens, a power exceeding that of the sun, moon, and stars. As startling as all this may be, the unleashing of the destructive forces of chaos are signs that portend the advent of redemption, the end of one age and the birth of another. Such cosmic turmoil calls to mind the primordial chaos out of which God brought order and the destruction at the time of Noah – out of which God brought order anew.

Sacred history is punctuated with God’s solemn promises. This history leads to a goal when Jesus Christ will be Lord of all. Jesus came to us in Bethlehem to renew the world in love and justice. Christ will come again as the enthroned Messiah to fulfil God’s promise of love and justice. The day of His coming, referred to as the “Day of the Lord,” foretold by Israelite prophets, will be a day of punishment for the wicked but a day of salvation, the advent of the new age of fulfilment, for those who practice faithful endurance. As the prophet Jeremiah proclaimed, God will raise up a “righteous branch” or the “Lord of Righteousness” will usher in a time of justice and righteous living (Jer 33:15). Rather than being terrified by what is happening in our world, the Lord exhorts us to be vigilant at

all times, pray for strength to endure, be confident, optimistic, and not distracted by the cares of this world (cf. Lk 21:34-36). Moreover, St. Paul wrote that we are to be blameless in holiness at the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Thes 3:13).

On this First Sunday of Advent, let us pray that God will give us the grace to “cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light” (Rom 13:12). Advent is a season of hope in which believers in Christ are invited to remain in watchful waiting for the Second Coming of the Lord in glory and to celebrate His first coming in Bethlehem, nourished by prayer and by the effective commitment to love.

God is faithful to His promises. Therefore, soon we will experience great joy, for redemption and eternal life will be ours when the Son of Man (cf. Dn 7:13-14) comes with power and great glory. As we journey through this season of Advent, let the expectation of the psalmist be ours as well: “Guide me in your truth and teach me. For you are God my savior, and for you I will wait all day” (Ps 25:5).

Father Tyrell Alles, OSB, is a Benedictine priest who serves as pastor of St. Louis Besancon Catholic Church in New Haven.

Bishop Dedicates New Narthex at Christ the King

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

Since Christ the King Catholic Church in South Bend is the only parish in the diocese by this name, Bishop Rhoades was happy to be there on Sunday, November 24, for the parish's patronal feast day.

Bishop Rhoades noted that this is the third time he has been privileged to bless a building project at Christ the King. Shortly after he was installed as bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, he came to bless the stained-glass windows, crafted in the part of Pennsylvania where he was born. Five years ago, it was to bless the large addition to the parish's "excellent Catholic school," which included a large gym and many additional classrooms. After celebrating the 12:15 Mass on November 24, Bishop Rhoades led a prayer to dedicate the new narthex, which adds nearly 2,000 square feet of gathering space for parish activities and outreaches. Jokingly, he asked the pastor, Holy Cross Father Steve Lacroix, "What's next?" He also commended the generosity and commitment of the entire parish.

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades pointed out that Pope Pius XI instituted the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe in 1925, when nationalism, secularism, and anti-Catholicism were rampant as the dark clouds of fascism and communism grew. Around the same time, the Cristero uprising in Mexico produced such heroes as Blessed Miguel Pro, whose feast day was November 23 and who faced the firing squad shouting, "Viva Cristo Rey!" (Long live Christ the King!)

"Amid these evils and historic events of government tyranny, Pius XI wrote an encyclical establishing today's feast in order to encourage Catholics to look to Jesus as their King and to be faithful to His kingship, a divine and spiritual kingship so different from that of the world," preached Bishop Rhoades. Eight years later, "at that terrible time of history," Christ the King parish was established.

Originally celebrated on the last Sunday of October, in 1969 Pope Paul VI moved the solemnity to the final Sunday of the Church year, just before the beginning of Advent.

Bishop reflected further on the nature of Christ's Kingdom, which He established by self-giving love rather than armed conflict.

At Mass, the parish's children's choir led the music, and



Provided by Christ the King Parish

Bishop Rhoades blesses the new narthex at Christ the King Catholic Church in South Bend on the solemnity of Christ the King, Sunday, November 24.

Bishop Rhoades recognized each member of the parish clergy: Father Lacroix; Holy Cross Father Cameron Corten, who is parochial vicar and chaplain at Marian High School; Holy Cross Father Bob Epping, a former pastor at Christ the King; and Deacon Joe Dietz. The parish's other deacon, Deacon Andy Oross, assisted later in the afternoon as Bishop Rhoades celebrated the confirmation Mass for 48 teenagers.

Father Lacroix said a new narthex wasn't his idea. Rather, it grew out of a 2017 parish survey "where parishioners brought to my attention that the exterior of my church needed a little tender loving care. Who would have thought that this would result in the new addition that we bless today? But the parishioners on our Building Committee quickly recognized that this was a golden opportunity to create the gathering space that our parish has needed for so long."

Architect for the project was Andrew Roche of Creative Design Solutions, a Christ the King parishioner who had just completed work on the school addition when this idea came along. Roche's mother taught at Christ the King School, where he attended and where his daughters are currently students.

One member of the committee was Ravini Fernando, a stay-at-home mom and substitute teacher who has served on the Parish Council and the Art and Environment Committee. She told Today's Catholic:

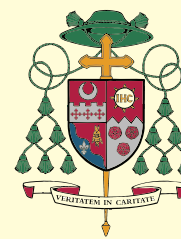
"The Art and Environment Committee always dreamt about having a bigger narthex. The old one was too small and too dark! We also wanted a bigger space for the ministry fairs as well as for parishioners to socialize and for outreach. The results are amazing! Beyond expectations! It will be a great space for St. Vincent de Paul, the casserole program, and many other future new ministries for evangelization and socializing." She added: "Christ the King is a wonderful parish. We thank God for this blessing every day. Father Steve has been a great pastor, a steady and thoughtful leader to us!"

Father Lacroix himself said, "I'm grateful to all of our parishioners who have put up with a lot of construction-related inconveniences so graciously over the last year and three months," including changes in parking and church access.

Accessibility and security are important features of the new space. In place of a makeshift outdoor wheelchair ramp, there is now an indoor carpeted ramp. Funneling all traffic through one set of entrances will increase safety, and the locks on the new doors will be programmed on timers.

A new welcome desk in the gathering space will provide literature, and video monitors will display information about upcoming parish events. Greeters will welcome everyone

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Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

- Monday, December 2: 10 a.m. – Meeting of Bishop's Cabinet, Archbishop Noll Center, Fort Wayne
- Monday, December 2: 4 p.m. – Blessing of New Divine Mercy Funeral Home, Cedar Canyon, Fort Wayne
- Tuesday, December 3: Noon – Meeting of Diocesan Finance Council, Ivy Tech Community College, Warsaw
- Wednesday, December 4: 10:30 a.m. – Advent Day of Recollection, St. Martin de Porres Church, Syracuse
- Thursday, December 5: 9:30 a.m. – Theology Class for Masters of Divinity Students, University of Notre Dame
- Thursday, December 5: 11:30 a.m. – Open Session with Theology Students and Faculty, University of Notre Dame
- Friday, December 6: 7 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Joseph Church, South Bend
- Saturday, December 7: 10 a.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Monica Church, Mishawaka
- Sunday, December 8: Noon – Confirmation Mass with Rite of Full Communion, Basilica of the Sacred Heart, University of Notre Dame

Q:

Do I have to go to Mass for both the Second Sunday of Advent (Dec. 8) and the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 9)?

A:

Yes! Catholics are obligated to attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. This year, Immaculate Conception is observed on Dec. 9. Even though the Sunday and Holy Day are back-to-back, each has its own distinct obligation. Catholics must attend a different Mass for each obligation — **two Masses total.**

SUNDAY OBLIGATION

OPTION 1

Any Mass after 4 p.m. on Saturday, December 7

OPTION 2

Any Mass on Sunday, December 8*

HOLY DAY

OPTION 1

Any Mass after 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 8*

OPTION 2

Any Mass on Monday, December 9

*Sunday evening Mass cannot fulfill both obligations at once, as there are two distinct obligations.

Carlo Acutis, Pier Giorgio Frassati to Be Canonized during 2025 Jubilee

BY GINA CHRISTIAN

(OSV News) – News that canonization dates have been set for Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, who have become popular patrons for teens and young adults, is being met with joy and gratitude by a number of Catholics in the United States.

Pope Francis announced on Wednesday, November 20, that he will elevate Acutis and Frassati, both currently titled “blessed,” to sainthood in 2025, when the universal Catholic Church will mark a jubilee year. Acutis will be canonized on April 27, during the April 25-27 Jubilee for Adolescents in Rome. Frassati’s canonization will follow amid the July 28-Aug. 3 Jubilee of Young People in Rome.

“What a wonderful gift to the Church militant both of these new saints will be,” Christine Wohar, president of FrassatiUSA – a Nashville-based nonprofit dedicated to promoting Frassati’s canonization, in collaboration with the Associazione Pier Giorgio Frassati in Rome – told OSV News in a November 20 email.

Wohar, whose organization is planning a pilgrimage to the canonization, said the canonizations are timely.

“Our culture so desperately needs Catholic models of courage, devotion to the Eucharist and Our Lady, true manhood, and fidelity to the Church,” she said.

Born 90 years apart, Frassati and Acutis both lived brief but faith-filled lives that saw them devoted to Christ, particularly in the Eucharist, and to those around them.

Dubbed the “Man of the Eight Beatitudes” by St. John Paul II, Frassati – born in Turin in 1901 to an influential family – began receiving daily Communion at a young age, while serving the poor through the St. Vincent de Paul Society and evangelizing his friends.

A lay Dominican, Frassati also participated in demonstrations to defend his faith against the Communist and Fascist parties in Italy. His passion for outdoor activities, such as mountaineering, has made him a patron of athletes. Frassati died in 1925 at age 24, having contracted polio, which doctors speculated he may have contracted from serving the sick.



OSV News

Blesseds Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati are pictured in a combination photo. Pope Francis announced that both are scheduled to be canonized in 2025.

Pope St. John Paul II beatified Frassati in 1990.

Almost a century later, Acutis in many ways mirrored his predecessor’s qualities. The sunny-faced teen – who was born in London in 1991 and grew up in Milan, Italy – displayed an early attraction to the spiritual life, reciting the Rosary and attending Mass daily, serving as a catechist, volunteering at a church soup kitchen, and tutoring children with their homework. At the same time, Acutis was known for his enthusiasm for typical teenage interests, such as video games, pets, soccer, and music.

Acutis died of leukemia in 2006 at age 15, having lived a brief life of extraordinary holiness that was marked by

“Our culture so desperately needs

Catholic models of courage,

devotion to the Eucharist and

Our Lady, true manhood, and

fidelity to the Church.”

CHRISTINE WO HAR

a profound devotion to Christ and the Eucharist. His desire to foster awareness of the Blessed Sacrament, along with his formidable computer skills, led him to create a database of Eucharistic miracles throughout the world. Pope Francis beatified him in 2020.

Michael Norton, president of the Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, Pennsylvania – home to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Blessed Carlo Acutis Shrine and Center for Eucharistic Encounter – told OSV News he has seen firsthand how Acutis offers a relatable vision for holiness to kids and young adults.

“Students are absolutely fascinated and drawn to Carlo,” Norton told OSV News on November 20. “It’s like, ‘Wow, he looks like me. I’m just like

him. ... He lived in our lifetime.’ He talks their language – he’s a computer programmer, he played soccer. And so the kids are really drawn to him.”

Similarly, Frassati has had a profound effect on students at a high school in Texas named in his honor.

“For us, this is yet another special grace upon our community, which has really been under the intercession of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati,” said Tim Lienhard, director of enrollment, marketing, and communications at Frassati Catholic High School in Spring, Texas.

Lienhard told OSV News on November 20 that the school has “really felt his spirit on our community, and you see that through our growth. We’ve grown from 46 students in our beginning year, 2013, to 350 today, and we continue to grow.”

The school is planning to send some 20 students to Italy during spring break in March of 2025 for a pilgrimage that will trace some key places in Frassati’s life, Lienhard said.

Actor Jeromy Darling, who played Frassati in a 2021 play of the same name at Open Window Theatre in Minnesota’s Twin Cities, told OSV News that encountering the saint-to-be through pre-production research had a profound effect on him.

“It changed my life completely,” said Darling, who as a convert to Catholicism said Frassati’s bold witness to the faith was personally inspiring, as the actor navigated rejection experienced for his decision to become Catholic.

“He’s an enormous, enormous part of my life,” Darling said. “He’s one of my best friends. I talk to him every day.”

Many Catholics have been inspired by an Italian phrase Frassati wrote on a well-known photo of him mountaineering: “Verso L’Alto,” which means “to the heights.”

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who comes to Mass.

The new narthex includes a pantry for the parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society to use, as well as the casserole and pack-a-lunch programs. There will be permanent donation bins for the St. Vincent de Paul chapter, the Christ Child Society, and the Women's Care Center. The Fitzpatrick Room will provide a space large enough for most parish meetings as well as funeral luncheons and post-event receptions. The room is named to honor Linda Fitzpatrick, who served for 27 years as parish secretary and religious education coordinator.

Building Committee member Martha Suter is proud that it was her idea to invite Fitzpatrick, also an artist and member of the building committee, to create the cross in the center of the narthex floor.

The previous vestibule remains as an atrium between the busy social area of the narthex and the worship space in the church. The atrium includes restrooms, confessionals, and a place for parents to quiet restless little ones.

In preparation for the celebration of their feast day, Christ the King annually celebrates a 40-Hour devotion.



Provided by Christ the King Parish

Parishioners, priests, and other guests mingle in the new narthex at Christ the King Catholic Church in South Bend on Sunday, November 24. Bishop Rhoades blessed the new space after celebrating Mass at the parish.

Still ahead is an open house, which will be held from 1:30-3:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 8, "so we can welcome the local community into this beautiful new space," said Father Lacroix, who added that he has asked every parishioner to begin praying for one person to invite to this event, whether it's a fallen-away Catholic or someone who doesn't have a worship community.

In summary, Father Lacroix said: "This new narthex will be a tremendous blessing for our parish. It's been a long process, and this type of construction project is always disruptive, but it will be worth it. Building a strong, Christ-centered community is an important part of parish life. When people feel plugged into their community and supported by fellow parishioners, it helps them engage in the parish more deeply. It's part of how we strive for holiness together as a community rather than as individuals. For years, we've lacked an adequate space for events that will let parishioners gather to strengthen relationships with other parishioners while also having the chance to meet new parishioners. Now that we finally have the space to increase this culture of encounter, I'm convinced that the Holy Spirit will ensure that it bears fruit."



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St. Jude Relic Tour Halted

JOLIET, Illinois (OSV News) – A tour of a relic of St. Jude conducted by Father Carlos Martins, a priest with the Companions of the Cross, was halted on Thursday, November 21, following an alleged “incident” involving students at Queen of Apostles Church, according to a statement from officials with the parish located in the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois, and from the diocese. The tour had planned to make two stops in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend – at St. Jude Catholic Church on Tuesday, November 26, and at St. Therese Catholic Church on Wednesday, November 27. Those stops, along with the rest of the tour, have been canceled. The statement did not provide details of the incident, and the Diocese of Joliet told OSV News via email on November 24 that beyond the initial statement they “have no further details to provide as the investigation is still ongoing,” but they “can confirm the ... priest visiting our parish and accompanying the relic of St. Jude was Father Carlos Martins.” “During the course of the day’s veneration in Queen of Apostles Church, an incident with the priest and some students was reported to have happened in our church,” the statement said, adding that the parish contacted the police, and an investigation was ongoing. “We informed the priest that he must depart from our parish and out of our diocese. In an abundance of caution, we decided that the remainder of the veneration of the relic and evening Mass would be cancelled,” he said. The incident was “immediately reported” to Bishop Ronald Hicks of Joliet, who “supported our decision to cancel the remainder of the event and on the evening of November 21.”

Pope Condemns ‘Arrogance of Invaders’ in Ukraine, Palestine

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The “arrogance” of the invaders attacking Ukraine and Palestine blocks the dialogue necessary to build peace in those countries, Pope Francis said on Monday, November 25. Without explicitly naming Russia or Israel, the pope referred to “two failures of humanity” in achieving peace: “Ukraine and Palestine, where there is suffering, where the arrogance of the invader wins over dialogue.” Speaking at an event commemorating the 40th anniversary of the peace accords signed between Chile and Argentina and mediated by Pope St. John Paul II, Pope Francis said the agreement remains “model for the complete, definitive, and peaceful settlement of a dispute” that “deserves to be repropounded in

NEWS BRIEFS

Notre Dame Theology Professor Wins 2024 Ratzinger Prize



CNS photo/Vatican media

Pope Francis greets Cyril O'Regan, a theology professor at the University of Notre Dame and winner of the 2024 Ratzinger Prize, during a meeting at the Vatican on Friday, November 22. Since 2010, the Ratzinger Prize, often dubbed the “Nobel Prize of Theology,” has been awarded to scholars “who have distinguished themselves with particular merit in the activity of publication and/or scientific research.” O'Regan, a professor of systemic theology at the University of Notre Dame since 1999, characterized his own academic work as analyzing modern philosophy through a Catholic lens to determine, “What can we assimilate and what can we not assimilate? And it’s generally a process of discernment,” O'Regan said.

the current world situation, in which so many conflicts persist and degenerate without an effective will to resolve them through the absolute exclusion of recourse to force or the threat of its use.” In 1984, Vatican officials brokered the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Chile and Argentina. In his address, the pope sharply criticized the willingness of countries to remain entrenched in armed conflicts despite the suffering they create, and he condemned what he called the “hypocrisy of talking about peace while playing war.”

U.S. Bishops Announce Prayer Vigil for Life

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) – The annual Prayer Vigil for Life will take place January 23-24, 2025, officials with the U.S. bishops’ conference announced on Friday, November 22. The event is hosted each January by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Pro-Life Secretariat, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., and The

Catholic University of America’s Office of Campus Ministry. It takes place on the eve of the March for Life, an annual protest of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which was overturned in 2022. The 52nd National March for Life will take place on Friday, January 24. “I enthusiastically invite Catholics from all around the country to join me in-person or virtually, in praying for an end to abortion and building up a culture of life,” said Bishop Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, Ohio, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities. The event will be broadcast on Catholic networks and livestreamed on the basilica’s website (nationalshrine.org/mass). More information about the schedule can be found on the USCCB’s website (usccb.org).

Brooklyn Priest Removed for Mishandling \$1.9 Million

BROOKLYN, New York (OSV News) – A Brooklyn priest has been relieved of his duties as pastor after an investigation

revealed he had transferred close to \$2 million in parish funds to bank accounts affiliated with the embattled New York City mayor’s former chief of staff. In a November 18 statement, Bishop Robert J. Brennan of Brooklyn announced he had relieved Monsignor Jamie Gigantiello, pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel-Annunciation Parish in Brooklyn, “of any pastoral oversight or governance role at the parish because he has mishandled substantial church funds and interfered with the administration of the parish after being directed not to do so.” From 2019 to 2021, the priest had transferred “a total of \$1.9 million in parish funds to bank accounts affiliated” with the law firm of business attorney Frank Carone, who in 2022 had stepped down as chief of staff for New York City Mayor Eric Adams. The priest “also used a church credit card for substantial personal expenses,” said the officials with the diocese, who said it is “fully committed to cooperating with law enforcement in all investigations.” In November of 2023, Monsignor Gigantiello was dismissed as diocesan vicar

of development after renting his church out for use in a violent, sexually provocative video by pop musician Sabrina Carpenter.

Pope Declares Spanish Mystic ‘Blessed,’ Advances Other Causes

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Using what Vatican officials called an “equipollent” or equivalent beatification, Pope Francis recognized as “blessed” a 15th-century Spanish abbess, mystic, and preacher. On Monday, November 25, the pope signed decrees in four sainthood causes as well as the beatification declaration for Blessed Juana de la Cruz, a mystic who was born Juana Vázquez Gutiérrez in what today is Numancia La Sagra, Spain, in 1481 and who died in 1534. The four decrees Pope Francis signed regard: a miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Maria Troncatti, a Salesian sister born in Italy in 1883; the martyrdom of Vietnamese Father Francis-Xavier Truong Buu Diep, who died in 1946; the martyrdom of Floribert Bwana Chui bin Kositi, a 26-year-old layman from Congo, who was a member of the Community of Sant’Egidio, which called him “a martyr of corruption,” and was kidnapped and killed in 2007; the heroic virtues of Auxiliary Bishop Josip Lang of Zagreb, Croatia, who died in 1924.

Pope Appoints U.S. Cardinal to Manage Vatican’s Pension Fund

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis has appointed Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family, and Life, as the sole administrator for the Vatican’s pension fund, which is currently unable to guarantee future obligations in the medium term. “We are all fully aware now that urgent structural measures, which can no longer be postponed, are needed to achieve sustainability of the pension fund,” the pope wrote in a letter addressed to the College of Cardinals and the heads of the Roman Curia and other institutions connected to the Holy See. Given the limited resources available to the Holy See and because appropriate funding will be needed to cover all pension obligations, there is a need for “making decisions that are not easy and will require special sensitivity, generosity, and a willingness to sacrifice from everyone,” the pope wrote in the letter dated Tuesday, November 19, and published by Vatican officials on Thursday, November 21. The pope wrote that the appointment “represents, at this time, an essential step in meeting the challenges facing our pension system in the future,” he wrote.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Christ Child Society Gives Back



Photos by Scott Warden

Members of the Christ Child Society of Fort Wayne gather at the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center on Wednesday, November 20, to pack and sort items for their Layette Program, which gives essential items to newborn babies and their families through more than a dozen social agencies across the region. Items contained in each layette pack include diapers, a sleep sack, gowns, onesies, blankets, bibs, bottles, socks, towels, wash cloths, and more. Learn more about their work at christchildfw.org.

An Evening of the Sacred

BY CLARE HILDEBRANDT

FORT WAYNE – On Friday, November 15, Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church in Fort Wayne hosted Adoration by Candlelight: An Evening of the Sacred, a night dedicated to prayers and practices found in the great tradition of the Church. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed in a dimly lit church, bringing forth an atmosphere of stillness

as the Ecce Choir led prayer with both Latin and English hymns. Songs such as “Ave Maris Stella,” “Abide with Me,” and “In Paradisum” were sung between periods of silence. This intentional silence acted almost as a prayer itself, drawing the participants deeper into an encounter with the Eucharist. The mood of the event was one of reverence, which closed with the Divine Praises.



The Blessed Sacrament stands in exposition, surrounded by clouds of incense, at Our Lady of Good Hope's Adoration by Candlelight: An Evening of the Sacred, on Friday, November 15, in Fort Wayne.



Photos by Clare Hildebrandt

Participants kneel and pray in a dimly lit church at Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church's Adoration by Candlelight: An Evening of the Sacred, which was held on Friday, November 15, in Fort Wayne.

Elkhart Knights to Pray 500th Consecutive First Friday Rosary

BY ERIC PEAT

In the spring of 1983, Benny Wiercioch received an invitation to join the Knights of Columbus St. Jude Council 1043 in Elkhart. One of his conditions for joining – which was gladly accepted by the Knights – was that he be allowed to begin a Rosary on the first Friday of each month.

Nearly 42 years later, this tradition is still going strong, as the Knights of Columbus are preparing to pray their 500th consecutive First Friday Rosary. Council 1043, which was formed back when Elkhart only had one Catholic church and now alternates its monthly Rosary between St. Vincent de Paul and St. Thomas the Apostle, will pray its milestone Rosary on Friday, December 6, at 7 p.m. at St. Vincent.

While parishioners and

pastors at both parishes have come and gone during the past four decades, the Knights of Columbus' First Friday Rosary has remained a constant in Elkhart – and so has Esther Dyer, who was there at its inception with her late husband, Dick, a former Knight.

"It's always been special to Dick and I, always a special gathering, although none of the people who were there when it originally started are still there, except me," reflected Dyer, now in her 80s. "It's just one of the things you can do to help people. There's a lot you can't do, but saying the Rosary with a group of people with a like mind is always something I like to do."

It's a tradition that has already been passed on to the next generation. As Dyer noted, if you were around to "start doing something



Photo provided by St. Jude Council 1043

Members of the Knights of Columbus St. Jude Council 1043 in Elkhart pose together in this undated photo. The group will pray its 500th consecutive First Friday Rosary at St. Vincent de Paul Parish on Friday, December 6, at 7 p.m.



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in 1983, you're no longer a spring chicken anymore." When Wiercioch's health began declining about 15 years ago, he asked fellow Knight George Kalil to begin leading the Rosary. Kalil took charge a couple years before Wiercioch's passing in 2012 and has led the way ever since, including navigating through the COVID pandemic, when families were forced to pray it separately in their own homes.

"He asked me to take it on; he had to give it up when his health got bad," Kalil said of Wiercioch. "Sometimes, the Rosary is said at funerals, and he had asked me to lead the Rosary at his visitation. It was emotional but an honor. I keep

it going because of Benny, and sometime when my health gets lousy, hopefully someone else will continue it."

The monthly Rosary is prayed specifically for the intention of the sick – those homebound or in nursing homes, those with long-term health problems or recovering from surgeries, and also caregivers of the sick. Names are taken out of bulletins from both Elkhart parishes and read aloud at the beginning of each Rosary in order to remain "all in our minds," according to Kalil. Some individuals are removed from the list because they are healthy again, and some because they have passed away. As Dyer said:

"There are different kinds of healing – there's the healing of getting well and the healing of going home. I don't think Dick would have lasted as long as he did without all the continuous prayers. There comes a time when it's time, and then we can pray for their soul."

When asked what has kept it going all these years, Kalil simply pointed to Wiercioch's commitment and belief in the power of prayer.

"I just think, more than anything else, it's been his dedication for many, many years, and his praying for the sick," Kalil said of Wiercioch. "Prayers help, and the Rosary is a great prayer, praying for the people who need help the most and who we can't reach out and help physically. I agree with that sentiment, so it was somewhat easy to take it over."

While attendance for the monthly Rosary has fluctuated throughout the years, Kalil says they normally have at least a dozen people show up. However, he is hoping for a big turnout for the 500th Rosary on December 6 at St. Vincent de Paul, which will be followed by a reception with cake and refreshments. Although the Knights of Columbus began the tradition and still lead it, all are welcome to come and join them in prayer each month. Any encouragement needed to participate, Dyer said, is provided in Matthew 18:20 by Our Lord Himself: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."



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Bishop Rhoades Confirms 14 at St. Mary in Bristol

BY DENISE FEDOROW

After spending some time testing their knowledge on the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit during his homily, Bishop Rhoades placed the seal of the Sacrament of Confirmation on 14 young members of the community at St. Mary of the Annunciation Parish in Bristol on Sunday, November 17. Bishop Rhoades was assisted by Father Bob Van Kempen, pastor at St. Mary, and Father Tegha Nji Afuhwi, parochial vicar.

At the beginning of Mass, Bishop Rhoades told the congregation it was “a joy to be here to celebrate Mass” and especially to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation and fully initiate them into the Catholic Church. He said the Holy Spirit would guide the young people and help them grow in their faith and become “faithful servants of Christ.”

During his homily, Bishop Rhoades remarked that with the closing of the liturgical year, the readings were all about the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ, which no one knows when that will happen. Bishop Rhoades said all must be prepared for the day of judgment, but we must not be fraught with anxiety.

“Some people get very anxious about it, and some religions have tried to predict when it will be, and that day comes and goes,” he said. “We believe Jesus will come again; we say it all the time in the Creed.”

He pointed out that there will be a time of distress and evil in the world before the Second Coming, and he asked the students which archangel fought Satan. He spoke to Ignacio Higinio Centeno, who chose St. Michael as his patron saint, saying “I hoped someone chose St. Michael because of the readings.”

He quizzed another student about what happened on the day of Pentecost and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The well-prepared student was answering the questions correctly, and Bishop Rhoades said he would keep asking until he stumped the student. “We could be here all day,” he joked with the congregation.

Bishop Rhoades told the young people that if they sometimes don't feel like coming to church, they should ask the Holy Spirit for the gift of piety – the desire to pray and worship God.

He asked another young man, Huey Bennett Auvid, why he chose St. Sebastian as his patron. Auvid mentioned sports as a reason, and Bishop Rhoades shared that when



Photos by Denise Fedorow
Bishop Rhoades places Chrism oil on the forehead of a confirmandi during Mass at St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol on Sunday, November 17. At right, Father Bob Van Kempen, pastor of St. Mary, assists.

he played basketball, he often asked for St. Sebastian's intercession.

He also shared that whenever he is in Rome, he visits St. Sebastian's crypt and jokingly suggested to Huey's sponsor that it might be a good confirmation gift to bring him to visit the crypt in Rome.

Bishop Rhoades shared that, in the second reading, St. Paul talks about our choice to live in the flesh or live in the spirit.

“When we live by the flesh, it's all about me, what I want, but real happiness comes when we live by the Spirit. We have to fight against temptations, and the Holy Spirit helps us,” he said.

Bishop Rhoades then asked the confirmandi about the fruits of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. When peace was mentioned, Bishop Rhoades said anxiety was an epidemic among young people today, adding: “God wants us to have peace. If you feel anxious, come to the church before the Blessed Sacrament and pour out your troubles to the Lord, and He'll give you peace.”

He said gentleness and



Bishop Rhoades asks confirmandi Ignacio Higinio Centeno, standing, why he chose St. Michael as his patron during a special confirmation Mass at St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol.



Bishop Rhoades welcomes the congregation at St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol on Sunday, November 17. He is joined by Father Bob Van Kempen, center, pastor of St. Mary, and Father Tegha Nji Afuhwi, parochial vicar.

meekness did not mean weak, and that being a man did not mean being aggressive and arrogant. He shared how, occasionally, St. Mother Teresa would attend the Masses he would celebrate in Rome, and he recalled how someone once asked her how to become holy.

“Her response was, ‘The first step to holiness is to be kind.’ We sometimes think it's not a big deal to be kind. It is; it's the first step to becoming a saint,” Bishop Rhoades said.

Bishop Rhoades told the young people when he confirmed them individually that each would be sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

“The Holy Spirit will be within you, to help you, guide you, strengthen you, so you can live your faith and produce these abundant fruits in your life,” Bishop Rhoades said. “And when you live by the spirit, do you know what happens? You're going to become saints.”

“My prayer for you as I confirm you today, as I anoint you with the holy Chrism, my prayer for every one of you is that you will become saints, and when Jesus comes again that you will be ready,” he said.

Before being confirmed, the young people stood and renewed their baptismal promises. They were then called up with their sponsors, and Bishop Rhoades laid his hands upon them and called them by their confirmation name as he anointed them with Chrism oil.

At the end of the Mass, Bishop Rhoades said, “I am very impressed with you young people.”

He suggested maybe one or two of the young men may be called to go to the seminary, and maybe one or two of the young women may be called to become religious sisters or nuns. He advised them all to “be open to how God may be calling you.”

He thanked the catechists, Father Van Kempen, and Father Afuhwi for their work educating the students. He thanked the sponsors “for your example of living the Christian faith – that's why you were chosen. Thank you for being a good example. And to the parents, the first teachers of the faith, when you brought your baby to be baptized, you promised to raise them Catholic. Thank you for your commitment to the faith – it's not easy being a parent these days.”

His last words were for the newly confirmed. “To all you young people – you give me a lot of hope. I am very proud of you, as I know Father Bob and Father Tegha are proud of you and everyone in this church is very proud of you.”



DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

Report abuse

Report abuse

It remains important for our Church to protect children and young persons from the evils of abuse. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend remains committed to upholding and following its guidelines, policies and procedures that were implemented for the protection of children and young people. These can be reviewed on the diocese's website, www.diocesefwsb.org, under "Youth Protection."

If you have reason to believe that a minor may be a victim of child abuse or neglect, Indiana law requires that you report this to civil authorities. If you or someone you know was abused as a child or young person by an adult, you are encouraged to notify appropriate civil authorities of that abuse. In addition, if the alleged abuser is or was a priest or deacon of the Catholic Church, you are encouraged to contact Jodi Marlin, Victim Assistance Coordinator, at (260) 399-1447 or jmarlin@diocesefwsb.org; or Rev. Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, at P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801; at (260) 399-1419; or at mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org. The diocese is committed to helping prevent the abuse or neglect of children and young people and to assist those who have suffered harm as a result of such abuse.

Denuncie los abusos

Es importante para nuestra Iglesia proteger a los niños y jóvenes adultos de los actos malvados como el abuso. La Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend se compromete a mantener y seguir las reglas, políticas y procedimientos que fueron implementados para la protección de niños y personas jóvenes. Estos pueden leerse en la página web de la diócesis, www.diocesefwsb.org bajo la sección de "Protección de Jóvenes" ("Youth Protection").

Si usted tiene motivo de creer que un menor es víctima de abuso o negligencia, la ley de Indiana requiere que usted reporte esto a las autoridades civiles. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce fue abusado, ya sea niño o persona joven, por un adulto, le recomendamos que notifique a las autoridades civiles apropiadas. También,

si el alegado abusador es o fue un sacerdote o diácono de la Iglesia Católica, se le insta comunicarse con Jodi Marlin, coordinadora de asistencia de víctimas, al (260) 399-1447 o jmarlin@diocesefwsb.org; o con el Presbítero Mark Gurtner, vicario general de la Diócesis de Fort Wayne-South Bend, al P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801; al (260) 399-1419; o al mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org. La diócesis se compromete a ayudar a prevenir el abuso o negligencia de niños y personas jóvenes y ayudar a aquellos que han sufrido daño como el resultado de tal abuso.

Báo cáo Lam dụng Tình dục.

Nếu bạn có suy luận cho rằng một đứa trẻ nào đó có lẽ là một nạn nhân đã bị lạm dụng hoặc bị bỏ bê, Pháp luật Indiana yêu cầu bạn báo cáo cho chính quyền dân sự. Nếu bạn hay người nào đó bị lạm dụng với tư cách một đứa trẻ hoặc thanh thiếu niên do người lớn, bạn được động viên đặc biệt thông báo cho chính quyền dân sự về việc lạm dụng này. Ngoài ra, nếu kẻ bạo hành bị cáo buộc là một linh mục hay phó tế của Giáo hội Công giáo, xin vui lòng liên hệ:

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Giáo phận Fort Wayne-South Bend cam kết bảo vệ trẻ em và thanh thiếu niên từ các tệ nạn lạm dụng và hỗ trợ những người kêu nài đã bị thiệt hại do hậu quả bị lạm dụng. Lam dụng một đứa trẻ là một tội lỗi. Chúng tôi cam kết lắng nghe, hỗ trợ, điều tra cùng thực hiện theo các chính sách và thủ tục như đã ban hành của Tòa Giám Mục.

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ကလေးသူငယ်များနှင့် လူငယ်များကို မတရားကိစ္စနဲ့ ပူးတွဲကူညီပေးခြင်းအတွက် မကော်မရှင်းရင်းဝါး

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ကူညီထောက်ပံ့ ဆောင်ရွက်ပေးခြင်းအတွက် Jodi Marlin ကို (၂၆၀) ၃၉၉ -၁၄၄၇ သို့မဟုတ် jmarlin@diocesefwsb.org ၊ ဒါမှမဟုတ် အသုံးပြုတော့ ဂိုဏ်းအုပ်စုသားနာယုပယုဖွဲ့စည်းဖို့ ပြုလုပ်ခြင်း- South Bend ရှိ အသုံးပြုတော့ ဖွဲ့စည်းဖွဲ့စည်းခြင်း

Mark Gurtner ကို လိစစာအမတ် P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801 ၊ ဖုန်းနံပါတ် (၂၆၀) ၃၉၉ -၁၄၁၉ ၊ သို့မဟုတ် mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org သို့မဟုတ် အဖွဲ့ကောင်းဖွဲ့ကားရန်

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Pope: Final Synod Document Must Be Accepted

BY JUSTIN MCLELLAN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Doubling down on the centrality of synodality in the Catholic Church, Pope Francis said that it is now up to local churches to accept and implement proposals from the final document approved by the Synod of Bishops on synodality.

Approved by the pope, the synod's final document "participates in the ordinary magisterium of the successor of Peter, and as such, I ask that it be accepted," the pope wrote in a note published by Vatican officials on Monday, November 25.

"Local churches and groupings of churches are now called upon to implement, in different contexts, the authoritative indications contained in the document, through the processes of discernment and decision-making provided by law and by the document itself," he wrote nearly a month after the synod's close.

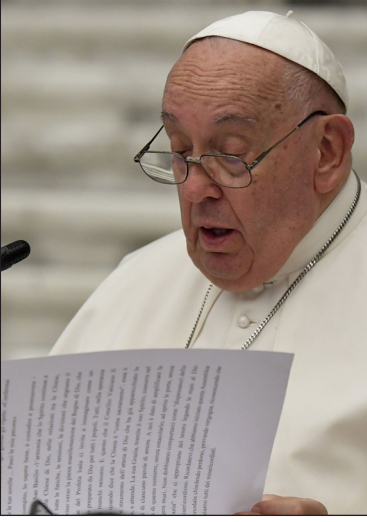
The final document outlined key priorities for the Church, including increased participation of laity through new ministries and adjusted governing structures, greater transparency and accountability among church leadership, and creating space for previously marginalized groups.

After synod members voted to approve the final document, including Bishop Rhoades, Pope Francis announced that he would not write the customary apostolic exhortation after the synod but would instead offer the document to the entire Church for implementation.

With the exceptions of the first synods convoked by Pope St. Paul VI in 1967 and 1971, all ordinary assemblies of the Synod of Bishops have been followed by an exhortation on the synod's themes and discussions by the pope.

In his note, Pope Francis clarified that while the document is "not strictly normative" and must be adapted to contexts where it is applied, it still obligates "local churches to make choices consistent with what was indicated" in the document.

He also underscored the need for time to address broader Church-wide issues, such as those assigned to the 10 study groups he set up in the spring to explore issues raised during the synod, including women's ministry, seminary education, relationships between bishops and religious communities, and the role of nuncios. More groups may be created, the pope said.



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis speaks to members of the Synod of Bishops on synodality after they approved their final document on October 26 in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican.

The conclusion of the general assembly of the Synod of Bishops "does not end the synodal process," he wrote.

Quoting his 2016 exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, on marriage and family life, the pope wrote that "not all doctrinal, moral, or pastoral discussions must be resolved by interventions of the magisterium," rather the bishops of each country or region can seek "more enculturated solutions" to issues involving local traditions and challenges.

He added that the final synod document contains recommendations that "can already now be implemented in the local churches and groupings of churches, taking into account different contexts, what has already been done, and what remains to be done in order to learn and develop ever better the style proper to the missionary synodal Church."

"In many cases, it is a matter of effectively implementing what is already provided for in existing law, Latin and Eastern," while in other contexts, officials with local churches can proceed with the creation of "new forms of ministry and missionary action" through a process of synodal discernment and experimentation.

Pope Francis also specified that during bishops' *ad limina* visits to Rome, each bishop will be asked to discuss what choices have been made in his local church regarding what has been indicated in the final synod document, reflecting on the challenges and the fruits.

Meanwhile, he said, officials with the General Secretariat of the Synod and the various dicasteries of the Roman Curia will be tasked with overseeing the synodal journey's "implementation phase."

JONAH Retreat Helps Participants Find Grace in Trauma

BY JILL A. BOUGHTON

Trauma-informed care is the gold standard for doctors, social workers, and service organizations. Gus Zuehlke, director of faith formation at St. Bavo Catholic Church in Mishawaka, thinks it is also essential for spiritual care. To that end, he's developed the JONAH Retreat (Jesus Overcomes Numbness, Anger, and Hatred), which he facilitated on Saturday, November 2. Ten people of varying ages and life situations participated this time around; St. Bavo sponsored a similar retreat last spring.

Within a short period of time in late 2019, three different individuals who have experienced trauma in their lives approached Zuehlke. They hadn't suffered the same kind of trauma, and all remained committed to the Church, but they begged for a retreat to begin processing their pain. That got Zuehlke thinking about how the Gospel can powerfully address human woundedness. He was given the acronym JONAH, fully aware of the two ways Jesus utilizes the story of Jonah, both to commend the repentance of the pagan Ninevites and as a metaphor for His own death and resurrection.

A few days later, Zuehlke was in church awaiting the funeral of the mother of St. Bavo's longtime parish secretary. Two parishioners with whom he had worked with on Christ Renews His Parish retreats sat down beside him. When he mentioned his developing idea, they gladly agreed to help with the new retreat. By the beginning of Lent, parishioners and friends had signed up for the first JONAH retreat. Then COVID-19 shut everything down – a



Shutterstock

much longer time in the belly of the whale than anyone anticipated. It wasn't until the spring of 2024 that Zuehlke and St. Bavo tried again.

Unlike many retreats that encourage participants to share their stories and get to know and support one another in small groups, the JONAH retreat focuses on each individual's relationship with the Lord and the Church. Nor is it a healing service or a counseling session, although participants are encouraged to consult Catholic Charities counselors at a later time.

During the JONAH retreat, personal testimonies are given by people from three different states in life: a single person, a married couple, and a priest. All share how abundant grace has enabled them to work through their various traumas, with emphasis on God's grace rather than the suffering. No quick fix or conversion is offered. Coming to terms with trauma takes time.

Throughout the course of

the day, participants are invited to spend time alone journaling or utilizing whatever form of prayer they find most helpful, including a powerful time of silent adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. At other times, they are free to pray in comfortable chairs by electric candles in the parish center or in the church, where other parishioners are interceding for the retreat. Toward the end of the retreat, there is an opportunity for sacramental confession for those so inclined. The 12-hour retreat (from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.) also includes two meals, many snacks, and the regular parish vigil Mass so participants don't have to worry about meeting their Sunday obligation.

November's retreat format was tweaked slightly from the spring retreat, which ran from Saturday morning through Sunday at noon, but the presenters remained the same. Zuehlke has high praise for Holy Cross Father Peter Pacini, pastor of St. Bavo, who "took my outline and made it sing," Zuehlke said. Father Pacini is an experienced retreat master, who facilitated a retreat program on the California/Mexico border for five years and then reformed and strengthened the Christ Renews His Parish program at St. Adalbert and St. Casimir parishes in South Bend while he served as pastor there. The individual presenter was Anne Jones, whose ministry, Face to

Face Fine Art Commemorative Expressions, was born out of her own grief. After losing three close relatives in 60 days, she began creating and donating portraits to people whose loved ones had died unexpectedly.

Zuehlke points out that the JONAH retreat is quiet but not silent. Conversation unfolds naturally at meals, and participants are free to seek out presenters or even to chat with those who serve the meals, Michael Langenbrunner and Karen Zuehlke.

The retreat has been meaningful to a variety of people. One young person made both 2024 retreats with the hope of building a community with people in similar situations. An older couple made progress in working through illness and aging issues, gaining strength and hope to continue their journey. Another young Catholic was able to map the testimonies onto the Seven Sorrowful Mysteries, a devotion significant to him. One participant said: "I learned to have compassion in a new way. I haven't suffered in the way some of these others have. My heart was expanded."

Zuehlke told Today's Catholic he is grateful that the Church cares enough not simply to emphasize radical conversion but to journey with people as they work through the very real traumas in their lives with deepening insight.

"It's opened a road of hope for me, too," he said.

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In My End Is My Beginning

“There is significance in the end of things,” my son Jacob once said, long before young men should think such thoughts, much less have the courage to utter them aloud. His words came to mind again yesterday as I attended the funeral Mass of Father Adam Schmitt, the eldest priest of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and the uncle of our own dear pastor, Father Tony Steinacker.

There comes a point in every man’s life when funerals seem more frequent than birthdays, and the obligation to pray for the dead becomes a part of the rhythm of every day. I passed that point a few years back, around the time I turned 50, and now every November – the month of the Holy Souls in Purgatory – is especially filled with thoughts on the significance in the end of things.

My mother passed into eternal life last year in the early morning hours of All Saints’ Day. I was sleeping in the chair next to her, waiting for my 4 a.m. alarm to go off, to give her another dose of medicine. When the alarm woke me, she had already slipped away quietly, after six weeks of in-home hospice. We knew the end was coming, though we did not know quite when, but the significance of such ends often only becomes apparent once they have occurred.

My Great-Uncle Eldon, the last of his generation, had passed away just two months before. Death did not pause

its inexorable march but moved on to the next generation, taking my mother, my uncle, and then – too early – the husband of one of my elder cousins, all within the space of six weeks. Memories flooded back of Thanksgivings and Christmases and Easters at Grandma and Grandpa Richert’s, when we were young and thoughts of death hardly ever entered our minds. Grandma and Grandpa’s house no longer rings with the joyful sound of young voices but sits empty most of the year, owned now by my Aunt Pat, whose husband, Uncle Al, passed away less than two weeks after my mother.

Isaac Watts’ “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” has always been one of my favorite hymns, and one I wish to have sung at my own funeral Mass, when the day comes. He captures the significance in the end of the things, but he also reminds us (as Bruce Springsteen, a bad Catholic like the rest of us, recently wrote) that “death is not the end”: “Time, like an ever-rolling stream / Bears all its sons away; / They fly forgotten, as a dream / Dies at the opening day.”

For those of us who have been united through baptism to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the last day of each of our lives does not fade away into eternal night but opens onto a new day, at the height of which we will rest in the glorious splendor of the



SCOTT P. RICHERT

ALL THINGS NEW

perpetual light of God, every moment of our lives on this earth held in His eternal memory. For most of us, the early hours of that new day will be marked by toil and strife, as we make our way through the purification of purgatory, so that we may enter into that perpetual light with – as Isaiah wrote – souls no longer stained scarlet by the effects of our sins but as white as snow or the fresh wool of a new, and redeemed, lamb.

Our time in purgatory, we pray, will be short, in part because of the prayers of those we have left behind. And so, as we wish to be prayed for, we pray now for those who have gone before us, and through our example of prayer teach the next generation that there is significance in the end of things because Christ has shown that death is not the end.

Scott Richert is the Publisher of Our Sunday Visitor.

Prepare for the Second Coming of Christ

For most of us, the beginning of Advent brings on all sorts of memories and excitement – mostly directed at the celebration of Christmas. Even for the most staunch “delayers,” Advent has the overwhelming connotation of Christmas. Yet, no matter if your lights are already up and the secular Christmas music is blaring or if you’re delaying all that until as close to Christmas as possible, it is helpful to step back and realize that the first part of Advent actually directs our attention to preparation not for the first, but the Second Coming of Christ.

We see this explicitly in the prayers for the Mass of the First Sunday of Advent. In the collect, we pray, “Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at His coming, so that, gathered at His right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom.” The resolve to run forth that we pray for here is not to the manger but to the King of Glory who will come again to judge the world. The prayer after communion reinforces this: “May these mysteries, O Lord, in which we have participated, profit us, we pray; for even now, as we walk amid passing things, you teach us by them to love the things of heaven and hold fast to what endures.”

This theme, however, is made most apparent in the



INTO THE TRUTH

FATHER MARK HELLINGER

preface for the Masses of Advent. The rubrics indicate that the first preface is to be prayed until Monday, December 16, then the Church switches to the second preface of Advent. This delineates the switch in the major theme of the season from preparation for Christ’s Second Coming to the preparation for the great solemnity of the Nativity. The central part of the preface for this first part of Advent prays, “For He assumed at His first coming the lowliness of human flesh, and so fulfilled the design You formed long ago, and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, that, when He comes again in glory and majesty and all is at last made manifest, we who watch for that day may inherit the great promise in which now we dare to hope.”

Given these prayers and their clear themes of preparation for the coming of Christ again, it is helpful to reflect on the connection between all of the themes of the end times that the Church has been putting before us in the closing

HELLINGER, page 13

We Are Reminded of the Saving Power of God’s Love



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

First Sunday of Advent

This weekend begins the Church’s new liturgical year. Usually, Advent is seen simply as a time to prepare for the feast of Christmas, but actually, the season is for us a new beginning. Advent summons us to consider the coming of Jesus into our own hearts, and it calls us to prepare ourselves for the final coming of Jesus at the end of time.

Christmas symbolizes these additional occasions of the Lord’s arrival into our hearts. Advent is a penitential season. We must focus upon Jesus, uprooting the tendencies, and even vices, that separate us

from God.

Jeremiah is the source of the first reading. His theme, as it was the theme of all the prophets, was that God’s people could expect no peace nor joy in their lives until they wholeheartedly returned to God.

In this reading, the prophet notes the sad state of affairs for God’s people. Misery is their lot. Sin has produced this unhappy situation.

Always merciful, always good, and always protective, God will send into their midst a savior, a descendant of King David. This savior will bring justice.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians supplies the next reading. It is an appeal to the Christians of Thessalonica, now the Greek city of Saloniki, to love each other. This love will signify inwardly following the Lord. The message ends by “begging” the Christian Thessalonians to live their lives in a way that is pleasing to God.

St. Luke’s Gospel gives this

weekend’s liturgy its third reading. It is forthright, even stark, as is typical of Luke’s Gospel. Quoting Jesus, it states that suddenly and overwhelmingly will come signs in the sky, with the sun, the moon, and the stars. Nations will be in anguish. The seas will roar. People will die of fright.

Amid all this great drama, Jesus will come in might and in glory. The Lord’s arrival will be an occasion to rejoice. He will bring final redemption.

All actively anticipate the Lord’s coming by praying and sacrifice.

This Gospel was written when, for Christians, the world was a difficult place to be. Certainly, the culture was against them. The political authority was turning against them. With Jesus, truly devoted followers prevailed.

Reflection

Christmas, in every culture, is soft and lovely. It is the acclamation of life itself, and of

redemption, even as it recalls the earthly birth of the Son of God to Mary in Bethlehem. But Advent is somber.

In much of the United States, days are cold. Nights are long. It almost is as if nature itself tells us that life can be less than delightful, but it is reality.

The Church uses Advent to teach us a lesson. Earthly life is not unending, never without change.

As St. Luke’s Gospel so bluntly says, as Advent says, Christ one day will confront us all. It may be a personal meeting. It may be at the end of time, in some manner yet unknown, but about which the Scriptures offer such colorful hints.

It will be for us a great day, if we have followed the Lord in our own lives. Jeremiah looks to such a day of salvation and victory.

On that day, good will stand starkly opposite evil. Victory will come if we chose the side of right, and of God,

even when days were cold and nights were long, but to choose good, we need strength. Evil is powerful. It lures us to death.

God will strengthen us, but we must ask for this strength, and our request must be sincere, honest, and uncompromised to be authentic.

Advent reminds us. God’s love and light warm and brighten our hearts, whatever the season.

READINGS

Sunday: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalms 25:4-5, 8-10, 14; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2; Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

Monday: Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday: Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday: Isaiah 25:6-10a; Matthew 15:29-37

Thursday: Isaiah 26:1-6; Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Friday: Isaiah 29:17-24; Matthew 9:27-31

Saturday: Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Matthew 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8

A Faith that Questions

The Scriptures are full of questions – by one count, more than 2,500 of them. The first is posed by the serpent in the Garden of Eden: “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” (Gn 3:1). The last is mournfully cried out by seafarers in the mystical vision of the fall of Babylon recounted in the Book of Revelation: “What city was like the great city?” (Rv 18:18). The hundreds of questions in between are as challenging and relevant to us as they were to the original inquirers. That is because our deepest questions do not arise in our minds but in our hearts.

Salvation history can be told through the questions that appear in Scripture.

- In the garden, God asked, “Where are you” (Gn 3:9)?
- Cain snarled, “Am I my brother’s keeper” (Gn 4:9)?
- Abraham questioned, “O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it” (Gn 15:8)?
- Isaac observed, “The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering” (Gn 22:7)?
- Moses wondered, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the people out of Egypt” (Ex 3:11)?
- Samuel asked, “Are all your sons here” (1 Sm 16:11)?
- David pleaded, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me” (Ps 22:1)?
- God inquired, “Where were you, when I laid the foundation of the earth” (Job 38:4)?
- God prodded, “What are you doing here, Elijah” (1 Kgs 19:9)?
- Mary of Nazareth asked, “How can this be since I am a virgin” (Lk 1:34)?
- The messengers sent by John the Baptist asked, “Are you the one to come, or are we to wait for another” (Mt 11:3)?

- Jesus questioned, “Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life” (Mt 6:27)?
- A demon blurted out, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God” (Mk 5:7)?
- The Samaritan Woman inquired, “Where do you get that living water” (Jn 4:11)?
- Nicodemus asked, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born” (Jn 3:4)?
- A lawyer asked, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life” (Lk 10:25)?
- Jesus asked, “What do you want me to do for you” (Mk 10:51)?
- The Twelve asked, “Who is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him” (Mk 4:41)?
- The Jews questioned, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat” (Jn 6:52)?
- Thomas asked, “How can we know the way” (Jn 14:5)?
- Mary of Bethany objected, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself” (Lk 10:40)?
- Simon Peter questioned, “Lord, to whom can we go” (Jn 6:68)?
- Jesus whispered, “Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man” (Lk 22:48)?
- The chief priests and scribes shouted, “Are you then the son of God” (Lk 22:70)?
- Pilate probed, “Are you the King of the Jews” (Lk 23:3)? Then pondered, “What is truth” (Jn 18:38)?
- Angels questioned, “Why do you seek the living among the dead” (Lk 24:5)?
- Two disillusioned disciples wondered, “Are you the



CALLED TO HOLINESS

JAYMIE STUART WOLFE

only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days” (Lk 24:18)?

- Jesus inquired, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these” (Jn 21:15)?
- A voice asked, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me” (Acts 9:4)?
- Paul of Tarsus marveled, “If God is for us, who is against us” (Rom 8:31)?
- “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals” (Rv 5:2)?

God is not afraid of our questions, but sometimes we are. While they may not always be expressed plainly, the questions that occupy our hearts are often what drive us forward or hold us back. Still, the questions that burn inside us do not necessarily indicate unbelief or undermine our faith. To the contrary, the questions we keep coming back to can guide us along the path that brings us to the threshold of a faith that is not only authentic, but life changing.

If we’re too concerned with having the answers, we may well underestimate the transformative power that contemplating the questions offers us.

Jaymie Stuart Wolfe is a Catholic convert, musician, speaker, pet-aholic, wife, and mom of eight grown children. She writes from New Orleans.

impossible to parcel out the mystery of what God is doing in this world and to merely commemorate the birth of the Savior.

Liturgical memory actually communicates the reality of the Resurrected Christ to us. We cannot compartmentalize God. Thus, as we enter into this time of preparation, we do well to keep before our eyes the mystery in front of us: God has already come into the world, and we can celebrate the glory of that truth. But we cannot forget that His coming in the flesh is fulfilled in our being united to Him (through, above all, the sacraments) in the communion of the Church. And this unity leads us to the longing for that which has not yet happened: the final coming of Christ to judge the world and to definitively reign as the King

of Peace, when death itself will be conquered and the world made new.

Therefore, the only real distraction from the spirit of the season of Advent is the one that draws us away from the hopeful anticipation (and preparation) of the Second Coming of Christ in glory. Let us watch for that day. And, as the final prayer of this Sunday’s Mass begs of God: May we walk amid passing things of this world holding fast to what endures. Or, put another way, a successful Advent is one which deepens our living of the truth that – to draw on C.S. Lewis – all that is not eternal is eternally out of date.

Father Mark Hellingner is the Parochial Vicar at St. John the Baptist Church in Fort Wayne.

HELLINGER, from page 12

of the liturgical year up to the solemnity of Christ the King and the coming of Christ at Christmas.

The Son of God was sent into the world with a mission: to do the will of the Father. This mission is ultimately to reconcile the world back to God. Thus, in His coming as a man, He begins His mission, but the totality of His task is not accomplished until everything is made new through His Paschal Mystery (His passion, death, and resurrection). Therefore, as Catholics, it is essential for us to recognize that Christmas is not an end in itself. The fact that God takes on a human nature – as amazing as that is – is not the only thing we are preparing to celebrate at Christmas. It is

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for December 1, 2024

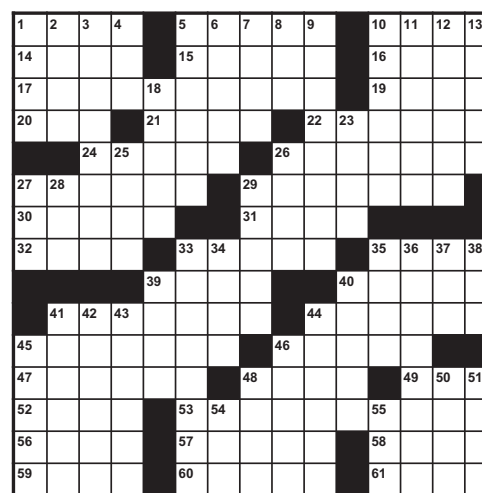
Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the First Sunday of Advent, Cycle C: signs of the last days. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

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| SIGNS
ON EARTH
WHAT IS COMING
POWER
RAISE
LIFE
STRENGTH | THE SUN
OF THE SEA
BE SHAKEN
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ABLE TO STAND

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ACROSS

- Herod offered this much of his kingdom to Herodias’ daughter
- What the apostles did while Jesus prayed in the Garden
- French clergyman
- Seed covering
- “Come to me, all you who _____ and are burdened” (Mt 11:28)
- Applaud
- To decorate like the Book of Kells
- Carry
- “The Thin Man” actress
- Suffix denoting state or quality
- Holy one, in Paris
- Cleanse
- Walks with long steps
- Barricade of trees
- Catholic author, J.R.R. _____
- Yields
- Singles
- Soviet news service
- Exodus infestation
- It returned to Noah with an

DOWN

- olive branch
- Pluck
- Muscular type
- He dreamed of fat and thin cows
- Redbreasts
- Reviewers
- Homes for 44A
- Hidden
- The pope is the bishop of this city
- Poly _____
- Muslim title of respect
- Rite of Christian _____
- Goes to court
- Patriarch respite, perhaps
- Laugh loudly
- In this place
- Russian negatives
- Against
- “_____ Mary”
- Catholic songwriter Guthrie
- Frog stopovers
- The scourge of winter
- Tosses
- Cavalry weapon

- Cyberaction site
- Crock
- Table supports
- Play part
- She is the butt of many jokes
- Lock
- Foil relatives
- Mary, Stella _____
- Holy holders
- Native Americans
- First word in an Old Testament book
- _____ of Contrition
- Opie’s aunt
- “... for eye, _____ for...” (Ex 21:24)
- Ritual breaking of bread during Mass
- Rivers in Spain
- Something that is owed
- Certain sin
- Sometimes it’s mini
- Abstract being
- Broad smile
- Follower of Daniel
- Archdiocese in the Czech Republic
- Toward this place
- Relaxed
- Negligent
- Conflict
- Tag declaration
- Ascend
- Joseph had a multi-colored one
- Letters above the cross
- Denial
- Lilt syllable

Answer key can be found on page 15

Bishop Luers Football Heads to the Dome | Death Penalty Opponents Rally in Indianapolis



Provided by Bishop Luers High School

Bishop Luers players and coaches celebrate on the team's sideline after defeating Garrett 28-14 in the Class 3A semistate game at Luersfield on Friday, November 22. The Knights trailed the Railroaders 14-0 at halftime before rallying for 28 unanswered points in the second half. After having won the Class 2A state title last season, Bishop Luers advances to its first Class 3A championship game, where it will face Heritage Hills at 3 p.m. on Saturday, November 30, at Lucas Oil Stadium, as it strives to win the 13th state championship in program history. For ticket information, visit bishopluers.org.



Provided by Sean Gallagher/Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis offers an opening prayer during a rally against the death penalty outside of the Indiana Statehouse on Sunday, November 17. Proponents of the death penalty are urging Governor Eric Holcomb not to resume state executions, including that of Joseph Corcoran, who is scheduled to be executed on Wednesday, December 18. In July, the five Catholic bishops of Indiana reiterated their pro-life stance "that the Church holds that human dignity is also offended when the state's punishment takes a life." Learn more at indianacc.org.

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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.

Taizé with Eucharistic Adoration

MISHAWAKA – St. Monica Parish, 222 W. Mishawaka Ave., will host adoration on Thursday, December 5, from 6-7 p.m. Adore the Lord Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament by candlelight, with beautiful meditative music provided by musicians of the parish. For information, contact Jessica Roberts at 572-255-2247 or jroberts@stmonicamish.org.

Little Flower Holy Hour for Vocations

FORT WAYNE and SOUTH BEND – The Little Flower Holy Hour is held from 7-8 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the St. Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel next to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in downtown Fort Wayne. A Holy Hour will also now be held at St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend at the same time each month. The Holy Hours are led by a different priest or deacon each month. Contact Christine Nix at cbo-nahoom-nix@diocesefwsb.org or 260-422-4611 for information.

University of Saint Francis Holiday Bazaar

FORT WAYNE – The University of Saint Francis Holiday Bazaar will be held on Saturday, December 7, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Rolland Center, 1200 Leesburg Rd. Featured artist and artisan booths from various disciplines will be offered, as well as live music. Free custom tote bags for the first 200 patrons. This event is free and open to the public.

Christmas Rosary Rally

FORT WAYNE – During this Advent Season in preparation for the Birth of the Savior, join together for a Public Square Rosary Rally outside the Allen County Courthouse on Saturday, December 7, at noon. The Rally will take about 40 minutes and will be a much needed witness to the secular world.

George Frideric Handel's Messiah

ANGOLA – Handel's Messiah will be presented on Sunday, December 15, at 2:30 p.m. at the T. Furth Center for the Performing Arts, 500 W Maumee St., by Steuben County Festival Choir and Orchestra and directed by J. Joseph Peters. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased online at trineutickets.universitytickets.com.

Posada with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

FORT WAYNE – FW Jovenes will host the 2nd Annual Family Posada on Sunday, December 15, to celebrate the Christmas Novena. Posadas are done in Latin America to commemorate Mary and Joseph's difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a place for the Christ Child to be born. Rosary begins after the 5 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 1105 S. Calhoun St. All families are invited to join. Register for the event at diocesefwsb.org/posada-registration. Contact Maria C. Solis at 260-466-8402 or msolisc8@gmail.com for information.

Home for the Holidays: Steps to Awaken Faith in Our Adult Children

SOUTH BEND/FORT WAYNE – Home for the Holidays: Steps to Awaken Faith in our Adult Children will be held on Tuesday, December 3, at 7 p.m. at St. Therese, Little Flower Parish Center, 54191 Ironwood Rd., and on Thursday, December 5, at 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Parish Life Center, 1502 E Wallen Rd. The event is free, but registration is appreciated. For more information, or to register, visit ablazemission.org/return.

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne
Roland Kerr, 92,
Cathedral of
the Immaculate
Conception

Judith Harrington, 74,
St. Vincent de Paul
Huntington
Norma J. Driscoll, 91,
SS. Peter and Paul

Beverly Anne Gish, 82,
Queen of Peace
Wabash
Robert C. Martin, 96,
St. Bernard

Louann Newport, 86,
Queen of Angels

Mishawaka
Michael Donahue Sr.,
81, Queen of Peace

Send obituaries to obituaries@diocesefwsb.org.

University of Saint Francis Lighting of the Lake and Living Nativity

FORT WAYNE – Experience the Nativity on the steps of the Oratory of St. Francis, 2701 Spring St., portrayed by members of the Saint Francis community on Sunday, December 8, at 6 p.m. Surrounding Mirror Lake will be luminaries honoring loved ones. To purchase a luminary visit saintfrancis.givingfuel.com/lights.

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Martin Family Parish Mission

DECEMBER 5, 6, and 7

Mass • Talks • Adoration • Confession

St. Mary Church, 414 Madison St., Decatur

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

6 p.m. – Mass in church followed by adoration with confessions
7 p.m. – “Lourdes: The Visions, the Message, the Experience”

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

6 p.m. – Potluck dinner in Parish Hall
7 p.m. – Men’s talk in Parish Hall: “Man Up and Guard Your Garden”
7 p.m. – Women’s talk in church: “Virtues of our Lady”

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

8:10 a.m. – Mass in church
9 a.m. – “Angels and Us” in church with confessions
2:30 p.m. – “If You Want Family, You Have to Be Family” in church

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

6 p.m. – Mass in church followed by adoration and confessions
7:15 p.m. – “For unto Us a Child Is Born: Portraying Joyful Tidings of the Messiah’s Birth”



Dr. Esperanca Camara received her Ph.D. in Art History from Johns Hopkins University, specializing in Italian Renaissance and Baroque art. From 2003-2020, she was a professor of Art History at the University of Saint Francis, Fort Wayne. She currently works as a Registered Nurse at Lutheran Hospital. She continues to mentor graduate students in art history at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri. Her research focuses on Catholic devotional art, especially the art of the Rosary.

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ST. ADALBERT, from page 1

his travels. When a young student asked how many countries Bishop Rhoades had visited, the bishop answered that he had counted them recently – 48. “That’s too many!” the student responded in surprise. Bishop Rhoades also was quizzed on his knowledge of country flags in the fourth-grade classroom, showed the third graders on a map where he had lived in Italy, and expressed his love for the Mediterranean Sea to the seventh graders. “I could live on a Greek island,” the bishop told them.

Holy Cross Father Ryan Pietrocarlo, pastor of St. Adalbert, told Today’s Catholic that Bishop Rhoades’ visit “brings a lot of excitement to our school community, and our faculty, staff, and students feel deeply supported knowing that the bishop is willing to dedicate so much time to spend with us and witness the mission of the school in action.”

Crain hoped that the benefits of the visit extend to the bishop as well.

“I am not a bishop; I cannot imagine the work or the planning or the organization or the heaviness of heart that role carries,” Crain said. “But I am the leader of a school, 250 people, and if I ever hope to be a decent administrator, I think that strength lies entirely in knowing my people. ... I get excited to see them grow and work with their families. ... I hope that on some level the chance to interact with our kiddos feeds our leaders, our superintendent, and our bishop. I hope it feeds what’s good in their soul and helps them to find energy and stamina and lightness of heart when it’s needed. It’s important because they make a lot of decisions that impact the kids, and there’s no better way to get to know them than to spend time with them.”

St. Adalbert School is the



Photos by Kasia Balsbaugh

Bishop Rhoades tells the story of St. Cecilia’s life during his homily on St. Cecilia’s feast day.

oldest continuously running school in the city of South Bend, first opening its doors in 1910. The school building is as full of history as St. Adalbert Church next door, which is currently undergoing renovations for its preservation. In fact, the original parish church was on the lower level of the school building, which is now the school lunchroom. Although the school had permission from the construction company to have Mass with Bishop Rhoades in the church, roof renovations have recently forced them to have school Mass in the school lunchroom, recalling the space’s roots as a church. Crain mentioned that the school community built a special altar for use in the lunchroom Masses, and that students still wear their Mass uniforms.

“It’s intentional in our school culture that Mass is set aside and special from everything else we do,” Crain said.

Originally founded by Polish immigrants, the school today

is largely first-generation Mexican-American – and as Father Pietrocarlo described it, the school offers “a Catholic education rooted in Latino culture.”

“We celebrate and incorporate Latino culture into our education, including traditions such as Día de los Muertos altars, posadas, and devotions to Our Lady of Guadalupe,” Father Pietrocarlo said. “At the same time, we honor our Polish roots, inspired by our patron, St. Adalbert, and recognizing that as Hispanic immigrants, we follow a deep tradition of Polish immigrants who paved the way before us.”

A sign of this shared Hispanic and Polish heritage is the school mascot, the eagle, which appears on both the Polish and the Mexican flags.

Father Pietrocarlo added that English is the second language for most students, and that St. Adalbert School is an English as a New Language school. That status means one of the school’s goals is to help all its

students reach proficiency in reading and writing English by the time they graduate in eighth grade.

St. Adalbert School boasts a tight-knit community where many cousins and siblings go to school together. In fact, Crain’s daughter is the fourth generation in her family to attend the school. A testament to the community is that many of the parents rallied together to provide a home-cooked feast for Bishop Rhoades’ lunch during his visit. “There’s an elaborate network of who



Bishop Rhoades laughs with the sixth-graders about their chosen books during free reading.

makes the best tamales, who makes the best fajitas,” Crain said.

Crain continually expressed her pride in the community and school of St. Adalbert.

“Enrollment is thriving, staff retention is up, our assessment scores are starting to go up, our church is getting the work that it needs, we have a strong pastoral team and amazing teachers, and if I could pick a time for someone to come check out what we’re doing, this is the time,” Crain said.



The kindergarten students show Bishop Rhoades the paper foxes they are making.



A Pre-K student at St. Adalbert School sports a uniform T-shirt with the school mascot, the eagle, on it.