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A Sign of Consecration

3 Franciscans of Mary Priests Receive Habits, Renew Vows at Mass in Angola



Scott Warden

From left, Father Jorge Sis, Father Raul Marroquín, and Father Osman Ramos stand after receiving the habit of their religious order, the Franciscans of Mary, during a Mass in which they also renewed their vows at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Angola on Wednesday, April 15.

BY SCOTT WARDEN

In a joyful celebration of consecrated life, three priests serving the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend publicly renewed their religious vows and were invested with the habit of their order, the Franciscans of Mary, during a Mass celebrated by Bishop Rhoades on

Wednesday, April 15, at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church.

Father Osman Ramos, Father Raul Marroquín, and Father Jorge Sis — members of the Franciscans of Mary — renewed their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and received the habit as a visible sign of their commitment to Christ and the Church. The three

priests serve together at St. Anthony as well as St. Joseph Parish in LaGrange and St. Paul Chapel in Fremont.

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades described the religious habit as “an outward mark of consecration to God. It is an outward sign of something interior — their consecration to God through the vows

of poverty, chastity, and obedience.”

The ceremony included the formal renewal of vows, in which each priest reaffirmed his lifelong commitment to live the Gospel through the spirituality and charism of the Franciscans

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OSV News photo/Alberto Pizzoli, pool via Reuters

Pope Leo addresses journalists during the flight to Algeria on Monday, April 13.

Bishop Rhoades Extends Support for Pope Leo after Trump's Social Media Attack

BY TODAY'S CATHOLIC,
OSV NEWS

Bishop Rhoades added his voice to a chorus of other Church leaders offering support for Pope Leo following Presi-

dent Donald Trump's April 12 social media attack in which he criticized the Holy Father for being outspoken against the United States' war against Iran and

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The
Diocese of
Fort Wayne-South Bend

All Christians are earnest to speak the truth in charity and join with all peace-loving people in pleading for peace and trying to bring it about.
— *Gaudium et Spes*, 78

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OSV News photo/Simone Risoluti, Vatican Media

Pope Leo XIV receives the offertory gifts from a family as he celebrates Mass at Saurimo esplanade in northeastern Angola on Monday, April 20.

Pope Leo Preaches Peace, Accompaniment in Africa

BY COURTNEY MARES

KILAMBA, Angola (OSV News) — In the middle of his 11-day apostolic visit to four countries in Africa, Pope Leo XIV celebrated an outdoor Mass for an estimated 100,000 Catholics in Angola on Sunday, April 19, urging the faithful of a nation still bearing the scars of a decades-long civil war to find renewed hope in the Eucharist and the Risen Christ.

Speaking in Portuguese to a crowd gathered in Kilamba, a planned residential district about 18 miles south of the capital Luanda, the pope delivered a homily that wove together the Biblical story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus with Angola's painful modern history.

"The history of your country, the ongoing difficult consequences you endure, the social and economic problems and the various forms of poverty call for the presence of a Church that knows how to walk alongside you," Pope Leo said, adding that the Eucharist has the power to "rekindle lost hope."

The pope's first Mass in Angola was the only Sunday Mass during his trip, which included visits to Algeria, Cameroon, and Equatorial Guinea as well as Angola, which is home to more than 20 million Catholics, and its Church is considered one of the oldest Catholic communities

in southern Africa, with roots stretching back to 15th-century Portuguese exploration and later colonization.

Drawing on the day's Gospel account of the road to Emmaus, Pope Leo described Angola as a "beautiful yet wounded country, which hungers and thirsts for hope, peace, and fraternity." He cautioned against the despair that can settle over a people long marked by suffering, much like the two disciples who walked in grief after the crucifixion.

"When one is long immersed in a history so characterized by

pain, one can risk losing hope and remaining paralyzed by discouragement, just like the two disciples," he said.

"Dear friends, the Good News of the Lord, even for us today, is precisely this: He is alive, He has risen, and He walks beside us as we journey along the path of suffering and bitterness, opening our eyes so that we may recognize His work and granting us the grace to start afresh and rebuild the future," the pope said.

Pope Leo also issued a pastoral caution, urging Angolan Catholics to remain rooted in

Church teaching and not to blend the faith with what he described as "magical and superstitious elements" drawn from traditional religious practices.

"Remain faithful to what the Church teaches, trust your pastors, and keep your gaze fixed on Jesus, who reveals Himself in the word and in the Eucharist," he said.

The energy of Angola's young and growing Catholic community was on full display. About three out of four Angolans are under 30, and many in the

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Pope Leo XIV visits St. Paul Catholic Hospital, in Douala, Cameroon, on Friday, April 17.



OSV News/Bob Roller

Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, blesses pilgrims in 2024 during the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. As the United States prepares to commemorate its 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is encouraging Catholics to participate in initiatives including a collective 250 hours of adoration and 250 works of mercy as part of anniversary celebrations.

USCCB Calls for Adoration, Works of Mercy to Mark America's 250th Anniversary

BY OSV NEWS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) — As the U.S. prepares to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has encouraged Catholics to participate in initiatives including a collective 250 Hours of Adoration and 250 Works of Mercy.

To celebrate the occasion, “America 250,” the initiatives encourage prayer for the unity and healing of the U.S., according to a resource guide the USCCB has published. The conference previously said the U.S. bishops will consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in June.

In his encyclical *Dilexi Nos*, Pope Francis “instructs us to ‘nourish our lives with the strength of the Eucharist’ in holy Communion and adoration, so that we might understand Christ’s love for all more deeply and live out this love ourselves,” the guide stated. “Our contemplation of the Sacred Heart leads us deeper into the mystery of our salvation and deeper into our love for Christ found in the faces of our sisters and brothers — especially those most in need.”

The guide stated that parishes can participate in 250 hours of

How to Participate

Parishes and individuals can participate in the America 250 commemoration by contributing to 250 Hours of Adoration and 250 Works of Mercy. For prayers, resources, and other materials, including how to log your Holy Hours or works of mercy, visit usccb.org/weholdthesetruths.

Eucharistic adoration by offering a Holy Hour on a weekly or monthly basis leading up to the nation’s July 4 anniversary. It noted that this could include continuing current practices or inviting new people to join. It suggested similar efforts to carry out 250 works of mercy leading up to July 4.

The guide includes resources for Holy Hours for life, peace, marriage, religious liberty, vocations, an end to racism, as well as a Sacred Heart Holy Hour.

“Consider hosting a Holy Hour or series of Holy Hours at your parish using the templates provided. ... You may have other ways to invite members of your community to spend some time in prayer for our country with Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament,” the guide said. “To prepare for the consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart, parishes can also incorporate the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus into their Holy Hour.”

As examples of works of mercy, the guide encouraged parishes to find ways to assist

women who are facing a crisis pregnancy, donate to food pantries and clothing closets, spend time helping community beautification programs, raise money for an overseas development project, sponsor a refugee family, tutor children or volunteer at homeless shelters.

“The seven Corporal Works of Mercy come to us directly from the Scriptures in the Gospel of Matthew,” the guide said. “Rooted in our lives of faith, the actions that Jesus calls us to in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and imprisoned, burying the dead, and giving alms are central elements of our Catholic identity.”

It quotes from Pope Leo XIV’s apostolic exhortation *Dilexi Te*, which itself draws on Pope Francis’ *Dilexi Nos*: “As we contemplate Christ’s love, ‘we too are inspired to be more attentive to the sufferings and needs of others and confirmed in our efforts to share in His work of liberation as instruments for the spread of His love.’”



PUBLIC SCHEDULE OF
BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

Veritatem In Caritate
(Truth in Charity)

- ◆ Tuesday, April 28, at 7 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Paul of the Cross Church, Columbia City
- ◆ Thursday, April 30, at 7 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Therese Church, Fort Wayne
- ◆ Friday, May 1, at 5 p.m. – Baccalaureate Mass, University of Saint Francis North Campus Auditorium, Fort Wayne
- ◆ Saturday, May 2, at 6:30 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Patrick Church, Ligonier
- ◆ Sunday, May 3, at 2 p.m. – Confirmation Mass, St. Pius X Church, Granger

Diocese of Fort Wayne–South Bend Protection Numbers 2025

13,991
Adults Received
Training

16,941
Children Received
Training

3,859
Employee
Background Checks

8,314
Volunteer
Background Checks

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



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Bishop Tells Knights to Live with 'Youthfulness of Spirit'

BY ANDREA KRUMANAKER

On Saturday, April 18, Bishop Rhoades celebrated Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne in conjunction with the state-wide convention of the Indiana Knights of Columbus, which was marking the celebration of the organization's 125th anniversary. Bishop Rhoades preached to those in attendance about fostering a "youthfulness of spirit" rooted in faith, hope and encounter with the Risen Christ.

With hundreds of Knights and their families gathered for the weekend-long convention, held at the nearby Grand Wayne Center in downtown Fort Wayne, Bishop Rhoades reflected on the Mass's opening prayer, known as the collect, which asked that God's people "exult forever ... in renewed youthfulness of spirit." Looking out at a congregation spanning generations, he noted that such youthfulness is not tied to years but to the condition of the soul.

"Whatever our ages," Bishop Rhoades said, "we prayed that all of us may be blessed with youthfulness of spirit."

That renewal, he explained, comes through Christ — particularly through Scripture and the Eucharist — and is essential not only for personal faith but for the Church's mission in a world often marked by anxiety, discouragement and loss of purpose.

Bishop Rhoades grounded his homily in the Gospel account of the road to Emmaus, in which two disciples, disheartened after the crucifixion of Jesus, encounter the Risen Christ without initially recognizing Him. Their journey, he said, mirrors the spiritual struggles many experience today.



Photos by Joe Romie

Members of the Knights of Columbus assemble before Mass outside of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne on Saturday, April 18.

"They were disappointed and disillusioned," Bishop Rhoades said. "They were downcast."

Bishop Rhoades suggested that their decision to leave Jerusalem symbolized something more profound — namely, a departure not just from a place but from the community of believers. He said, in effect, they were leaving the Church.

Yet the turning point came when Christ met them on the road, patiently explaining the Scriptures and revealing how suffering and glory were united in God's plan. Though they did not yet recognize Him, something began to change within them.

"Were not our hearts burning within us," the disciples recalled.

Bishop Rhoades pointed to this moment as a key to understanding spiritual renewal. The word of God, he said, has the power to rekindle faith and re-

store hope, even amid confusion or doubt.

The encounter reached its climax at table, when Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them. In that familiar action, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him.

For Bishop Rhoades, this moment underscores the central role of the Eucharist in the life of the Church.

"The climax of our journey of faith is also when we participate at the table of the Eucharist," he said. "Here our spirit is nourished in the most profound way by the body and blood of the Lord."

Just as Christ remained with the disciples in the breaking of the bread, Bishop Rhoades emphasized that He continues to remain with the Church today, present in the Eucharist and through the Holy Spirit.

That presence, he said, is what sustains the "youthfulness of

spirit" for which the faithful pray.

At the same time, Bishop Rhoades acknowledged the many forces that can erode that spiritual vitality. Disappointments, suffering, fear and anxiety can weigh heavily on individuals, regardless of age.

"Even young people can lose their youthfulness of spirit," he said.

In particular, he pointed to a broader cultural struggle among many young adults, who may feel adrift or disconnected, especially in an increasingly digital world. A lack of meaning or purpose can lead to discouragement or even despair.

"This is an evangelizing moment for the Church," he said, adding that it is a mission the Knights of Columbus are especially called to embrace.

That mission is lived out not only in large gatherings like the state convention, but also in the

day to day lives of its members.

The Knights of Columbus has a long history both nationally and within Indiana. The organization was founded in 1882 by Blessed Father Michael J. McGivney in New Haven, Connecticut. In Indiana, the first council, Mater Dei Council 437, was established June 25, 1899, in Indianapolis. Later that year, on Oct. 15, 1899, Council 451 was instituted in Fort Wayne. By February 1902, the first Indiana State meeting was held in South Bend, and that same year the Indiana State Council began its work supporting parishes and local communities.

More than a century later, that legacy continues through the lives of its members.

Bishop Rhoades echoed that call to mission in his homily, encouraging members to help others encounter Christ through both word and example.

"Our youthfulness of spirit can attract others to Christ and to His Church," he said.

As the Mass concluded, Bishop Rhoades offered a prayer that echoed the collect with which the liturgy began, that God would renew the hearts of His people, kindle within them a deeper love for His word and sustain them through the gift of the Eucharist.

"May our hearts burn within us as we read and pray with the Scriptures," he said. "May we always recognize Him in the breaking of the bread."

And with that recognition, he added, comes a mission, one shared by the entire Church and embodied in a particular way by the Knights of Columbus, to bring the Gospel into the world.

"That's our mission," Bishop Rhoades said, "to spread the truth and joy of our faith in our words and in our deeds."



SCHOOL SPIRIT

YOUR SCHOOLS, YOUR STORIES

This academic year, Today's Catholic is partnering with the student media programs at all four Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Each week, student writers, editors, and photographers from Bishop Luers and Bishop Dwenger in Fort Wayne, Saint Joseph in South Bend, and Marian in Mishawaka will share their work on this new page, School Spirit, dedicated to telling the stories of their school communities.

Finding Peace in the Final Stretch

As Graduation Approaches, Bishop Luers Students Navigate Stresses by Turning to Faith and Self-Care

BY HELEN VANFOSSEN

As the school year ends, the excitement of summer break is often mixed with an overwhelming sense of pressure. Final exams, graduation preparations and the uncertainty of what comes next can weigh heavily on students, especially seniors preparing to step into a new chapter of life.

At Bishop Luers High School, this reality is something many students know well. While the hallways buzz with anticipation for the last day of school, there is also a quieter, more personal struggle happening beneath the surface: the challenge of maintaining mental and emotional well-being.

For seniors, the transition can feel particularly intense.

"It's weird because you are very excited to be done, but at the same time you are so stressed about everything ending," said Bishop Luers senior Vahsti Garcia. "There's pressure to finish strong but also pressure about what might come after our graduation."



Photos provided by Bishop Luers High School

This mix of emotions is natural. Change, even positive change, can bring anxiety. The Church reminds us that in moments of uncertainty we are never alone. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, "Come to me, all of you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." This invitation is especially meaningful during seasons of stress.

Senior Zoe Cramer reflected on the importance of leaning on faith during this time.

"I've begun to realize I don't have to handle everything perfectly," she said. "When I feel overwhelmed, I try to pray or just take a step back and remember that God already has a plan for me and my future. I actually find myself a little less stressed

after I remind myself of that."

In addition to faith, small, intentional practices can make a meaningful difference in managing mental health. Taking breaks from studying, spending time with friends, and getting enough rest are not distractions; they are necessary forms of care. Talking openly with trusted friends, family or teachers can also help

lighten the emotional load.

Catholic teaching emphasizes the dignity of the whole person: mind, body and soul. Caring for mental health is not separate from faith; it is part of honoring the life God has given us. As students approach the finish line of the school year, it is important to remember that success is not measured solely by grades or achievements but by growth, resilience and trust in God's plan.

The end of the school year is not just a conclusion; it is a transition. And while transitions can be challenging, they are also opportunities for renewal. By staying rooted in faith, supporting one another and giving them grace, students can move forward with both confidence and peace.

As Bishop Luers seniors prepare to walk across the graduation stage, they carry with them not only their accomplishments but also the strength they have built along the way — a strength that will guide them into whatever comes next.

Helen VanFossen is a senior at Bishop Luers High School.



NEWS BRIEFS

POPE LEO DONATES \$100K TO CRS CLEAN WATER PROJECT IN EL SALVADOR



OSV News photo/Fernando Gómez, courtesy of CRS

Archbishop Luigi Roberto Cona, apostolic nuncio to El Salvador, visits El Nance hamlet in Metalío canton, which is part of the Diocese of Sonsonate, on March 13 to talk to community members benefiting from a safe water project launched by the papal nuncio to that nation and by Catholic Relief Services, the official humanitarian and development agency of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Providing clean, drinkable water to El Nance was one of the first phases of the Agua Segura (Safe Water) project, which will continue to expand thanks to a \$100,000 personal donation from Pope Leo XIV. The gift was announced in an April 20 news release issued by CRS and the apostolic nunciature in El Salvador. “Clean water is life,” said CRS president and CEO Sean Callahan, noting he and the agency were “deeply honored” by Pope Leo’s donation. “This gift demonstrates the Holy Father’s personal experience with families and communities struggling to keep themselves healthy,” Callahan added.

...serving vulnerable children, calling the termination abrupt and unprecedented.

Just War Not ‘a Blank Check for Violence,’ USCCB Chair Says

WASHINGTON, D.C. (OSV News) — The Catholic Church’s just war doctrine is not “a blank check for violence,” and the pope is the “guardian of conscience,” said Auxiliary Bishop James Massa of Brooklyn, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine. Bishop Massa spoke at length with OSV News following his April 15 statement clarifying the Catholic Church’s teaching on just war, which came as President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance and other Trump administration officials have publicly challenged Pope Leo XIV’s calls for peace amid the U.S.-Israel war on Iran and other conflicts. War should always be a last resort, with peace as primary, said Bishop Massa, adding that the U.S.-Israel war on Iran

does not meet the criteria for a just war. The bishop stressed that while “each of us must take a position based on conscience,” we must “make sure that our consciences are well informed by the Church’s wisdom” — with the pope, as the successor of St. Peter, the “guardian of conscience.”

Time Magazine Counts Pope Leo Among ‘Most Influential People of 2026’

NEW YORK (OSV News) — Time magazine has named Pope Leo XIV to its “100 Most Influential People of 2026” list. The accolade was announced on Wednesday, April 15, with the first U.S.-born pope joining a diverse group of individuals distinguished by their contributions as leaders, innovators, icons, artists and pioneers. Each list member was feted on Time’s website with a short reflection from a prominent figure, with filmmaker Martin Scorsese saying in his commentary about Pope Leo that he was “struck by his bravery

and his common touch.” He noted that Pope Francis, whom he knew and loved as a friend, “always stressed that the Church was not a building or a symbol but the actual teachings of Jesus,” adding, “I believe that Pope Leo shares that view.” The filmmaker also pointed to Pope Leo’s endorsement of the Christian classic “The Practice of the Presence of God,” which Scorsese said, “offers a model for finding God in daily life, and for taking the Church out of buildings, no matter how majestic, and into everyday existence.”

Leaders Concerned About Costa Rica’s Deal with U.S. to Receive Deportees

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (OSV News) — The Catholic Church in Costa Rica is raising concerns about a new migration agreement the Central American nation has with the United States that allows up to 25 deported migrants per week to be sent to the country. The first group arrived on Satur-

day, April 11, in San José, including people from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Under the deal, signed by outgoing President Rodrigo Chaves and U.S. envoy Kristi Noem, migrants will stay in a hotel for a week under the International Organization for Migration. What happens next remains unclear. Auxiliary Bishop Daniel Blanco of San José said the Church was not consulted when it has much to contribute to the government when it comes to immigration, helping meet material and spiritual needs of migrants, and he warned the country may lack the capacity to assist such a diverse group, especially given language barriers. Church leaders also pointed to a troubled 2025 case, when migrants were held in poor conditions until a court intervened. Catholic officials called for policies that prioritize human dignity while expressing hope for dialogue with incoming President Laura Fernández Delgado.

Court Hears Lawsuit on Illinois Law Mandating Abortion Referrals

CHICAGO (OSV News) — The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago heard oral arguments on Friday, April 10, in a challenge to an Illinois law that compels pro-life physicians and pregnancy centers to give patients who ask for it a referral to an abortion provider. Erin Hawley, counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, a public interest firm dedicated to religious freedom, went before a three-judge panel of the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to argue against the law on behalf of pro-life physicians and pregnancy centers. The case is *Shroeder et al v. Treto Jr.* and concerns a provision left in place by U.S. District Judge Iain D. Johnston in a split decision handed down April 4, 2025. Johnston, of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, struck down the part of the state’s 2016 Health Care Right of Conscience Act that required pro-life physicians and pregnancy centers to share the “benefits of abortion” after giving a pregnant woman an ultrasound — or lose their conscience protection rights. But he upheld a separate amendment to the act that lawyers for pro-life plaintiffs argued also “gutted conscience protections for pro-life physicians and pregnancy centers and required them to refer for abortion.” Hawley told OSV News outside the federal courthouse in downtown Chicago that, based on the day’s proceedings, the 7th Circuit seemed to agree with ADF’s position “that referrals are, in fact ... protected by the First Amendment.”

Vatican Ends Canonization Cause for Jesuit Father Walter Ciszek

ALLENTOWN, Pennsylvania (OSV News) — The canonization cause for Jesuit Father Walter Ciszek — a Polish American priest who ministered amid years in Soviet captivity — has been terminated, although Vatican’s decision does not “diminish the enduring spiritual value” of his witness, said a leading advocate for the cause. In an April 9 letter, Monsignor Ronald C. Bocian, board president of the former Father Walter Ciszek Prayer League, advised fellow league members that the Diocese of Allentown had been informed the cause’s documentation “does not support” advancing the case for beatification or sainthood. Monsignor Bocian’s letter replicated a statement from the diocese, provided to OSV News on Friday, April 17, saying the prayer league will now become the Father Walter J. Ciszek Society and “remain committed to honoring his memory, sharing his message, and encouraging devotion to the profound spiritual insights he left to the Church.” In 1963, President John F. Kennedy secured the priest’s release from the Soviet Union, with Father Ciszek recounting his experiences of faith and ministry despite imprisonment in the books “He Leadeth Me” and “With God in Russia,” co-written with fellow Jesuit Father Daniel Flaherty. Until his death in 1984, Father Ciszek worked at the John XXIII Center at Fordham University, which is now the Center for Eastern Christian Studies at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania.

Trump Administration Ends Contract with Miami Catholic Charities

MIAMI (OSV News) — The Trump administration has canceled an \$11 million federal contract with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, ending its work sheltering unaccompanied migrant children and giving the agency just three months to relocate those in its care. The decision, reported on Wednesday, April 15, came from the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement amid a broader immigration crackdown. The move follows the administration’s earlier decision to end a decades-long refugee resettlement partnership with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami warned the cuts will force the program to shut down, despite what he described as a nationally recognized model of care. He emphasized the Church’s long-standing role in

Celebrate the Holy Year of St. Francis with the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration

BY THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION

Pope Leo XIV has given us another opportunity for the graces of a jubilee year. This time, however, we are not just cultivating one virtue but a host of virtues – those found in the person of St. Francis of Assisi. Pope Francis drew our attention to St. Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si'* and highlighted him as patron of care for all of creation — both our earthly home and our human brothers and sisters. It is toward this care for humanity that Pope Leo wishes to draw our attention.

This Jubilee Year of St. Francis calls us to silently pause and look to St. Francis as our model of the authentic living of Christ's life. His humility, simplicity and dedication to conversion and reconciliation are all virtues we are called to emulate during this year. This is an opportunity to move into a maturity that simplifies prayer by deepening it.

In honor of the 800th year since the death of St. Francis, the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy, recently displayed for public veneration the relics of St. Francis' body. This display was not simply a devotional exercise; it expressed a desire to be near someone who lived in a time not too different from our own.

St. Francis powerfully influenced the hearts of all levels of society by drawing others not to himself but to Christ, the source of true peace. Everywhere he went, his proclamation of "May the Lord give you peace" echoed Christ's gift of peace as victory over death. The conversion of the heart from the death of sin to the freedom of God is what brings about true and lasting peace. This peace is found not in having material goods but from practicing detachment along with integrating our whole life and being with faith and prayer. This singular peace is a fruit of reconciliation with God, humanity and creation.

A plenary indulgence is one of the great spiritual gifts offered during an extraordinary jubilee year. It is a grace through which God removes all temporal punishment remaining for sins that have already been forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, allowing the soul to be renewed in freedom and peace. In order to receive an indulgence, the person must have detachment from all



Photos provided by the Sisters of St. Francis of the Perpetual Adoration



sin, pray for the intentions of the Holy Father, go to confession and receive holy Communion within eight days before or after the prayers for indulgence are prayed. The foundation of all indulgences is an encounter with God and His limitless mercy. Through conversion and forming an attitude of detachment from all sin, an indulgence frees the heart from slavery to sin and opens it to God's transforming power. The indulgence bears fruit in the healing of relationships, greater forgiveness and even deeper conversion. St. Francis was exemplary in all of these fruits, showing the immense grace he received from the Lord through his desire to be close to Him. During this jubilee year, a plenary indulgence can be obtained by praying at any Franciscan chapel or any chapel dedicated to St. Francis by visiting the site in the form of a pilgrimage.

Why should one go on a pilgrimage and not just make a generic visit or take a vacation? A pilgrimage is a physical trip to a holy site that reflects an interior journey that is ventured upon to deepen one's faith, seek spiritual or physical healing or an encounter with God. It requires spiritual preparation in addition to the basic physical preparations for a journey. To make a pilgrimage is to come before God in a place where He has manifested His grace and humbly ask for His loving mercy. As St. Francis of Assisi showed us, life itself is a pilgrimage to heaven, and taking time to travel intentionally on pilgrimage can help us to internalize this spirituality.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration are marking this jubilee year of grace by displaying a first-class relic from the body of St. Francis of Assisi. In this spirit of celebration and renewal, we are inviting organized pilgrimage groups to make scheduled visits to St. Francis Convent in Mishawaka to pray before the relic and share in the blessings of the year. If you are interested in organizing a group to visit our chapel, please contact Sister Lucia Richardson, OSF, at ssfpa.pilgrimage@gmail.com. The relic of St. Francis will be available for veneration the same times as the adoration chapel is open, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. The St. Francis Convent is located at 1515 W. Dragoon Trail in Mishawaka.

Guadalupe's Owner Finds Grace in Suffering

After Multiple Health Scares, Jimmie Schindler Rediscovered His Faith and Revamps His Priorities

BY PAULA LENT

In 2020, Jimmie Schindler was a successful restaurant owner, operating Guadalupe's Mexican Grill in Fort Wayne — a restaurant known for its fresh, allergen-friendly food and named after Our Lady of Guadalupe — while raising four kids with his wife, Katie. Then his world gradually began to turn upside down.

In the first wave of trials, Schindler's father entered hospice, his son underwent very risky surgery, and his business plan had to shift in response to the pandemic. But he took this all in stride, consoling himself that even in the worst-case scenario there would be good. He rationalized: His son was baptized and before the age of reason, so he would go to heaven; if his father died, it would be a merciful release from his suffering; and if his business went under, he could start again.

In the end, his son survived, his dad died (a mercy, he said), and the restaurant weathered the storm.

Then the second wave of trials hit, and this time it led to a radical transformation.

A Shocking Diagnosis

It all began close to Christmas in 2021. Schindler fell sick with COVID, spiking a fever of 104 degrees. Two weeks later, he became sick with influenza. Once he recovered, lingering signs of illness and an unexplained loss of appetite led him to see his doctor again. Examining him, the doctor discovered a lump, and after further testing, he was diagnosed with stage 3B Hodgkin's lymphoma. The reason for his loss of appetite? He had a plethora of lymph nodes that had turned into tumors and were collectively crushing his stomach. Based on a variety of factors, including his present malnourished state, he was given a 60 to 70 percent chance of surviving.

As a 30-something-year-old in peak fitness, with a wife and five kids to care for, this was the last news Schindler expected to receive. He soon began treatment, and, at the same time, began to reexamine his life.

Until falling sick, the Fort Wayne businessman had lived an extremely busy lifestyle. Working 80-hour workweeks was bringing him worldly success, but he began to see more clearly what that success was costing him. Though he had experienced a reversion to the



Scott Warden

Jimmie Schindler poses in front of the counter at the Guadalupe's location in Georgetown Square in Fort Wayne.

Catholic faith of his upbringing after marrying his churchgoing wife, Schindler was a lukewarm Catholic — indifferent to his spiritual growth and doing the bare minimum by attending Sunday Mass out of obligation, not love. His commitment to his work left him with little time to spend with his family. He rarely went on dates with his wife and put no effort into catechizing his children.

Reflecting on how he was living his life, Schindler had an epiphany. "I realized that my primary role as a dad is to get my kids to heaven," he told Today's Catholic. And so, Schindler made a deal with God: He would uphold his responsibility for his children's faith if God let him live.

Faith Formation

God preserved his life, and Schindler kept his promise. He began prioritizing what would help his family "get to heaven" by transitioning to 10-hour workweeks and carving out a nightly routine of learning and prayer with his family. In their 20-30 minutes of family catechesis, the Schindlers read through the Baltimore Catechism several times, learned

Latin prayers, read the letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch, and began reading and discussing a chapter of the New Testament together each night.

Through this, Schindler witnessed his children's love for the faith thrive — something that brings him enormous joy.

As he dealt with lingering effects of his chemo treatment, including neuropathy, Schindler embraced the concept of redemptive suffering by habitually offering up his pain for the sake of others. Little did he realize how pivotal this practice would become several

months later when he began to experience his third — and most severe — wave of trials.

His Greatest Trial

Still immunocompromised from chemotherapy, one day, Schindler began coughing up blood. He saw a physician and was diagnosed with walking pneumonia. Then, he became septic. Informed that there was only a 30 percent survival rate among healthy individuals battling the same type of sepsis, Schindler quickly asked for his priest and received the Anointing of the Sick.

He describes what unfolded next as surreal.

"Nurses were running around; my wife was sobbing. ... I had some antibiotic resistance from being on long-term antibiotics during chemo," he recalled.

After a week in the Intensive Care Unit, he made a miraculous recovery.

But his ordeal was not over. About a week later, he began experiencing intense pain on his right side, near his ribs. Seeking medical care again, Schindler this

time was diagnosed with pleurisy — an inflammation of the lining of the lungs.

In order to drain the fluid accumulating between his lungs and ribs, a needle needed to be inserted into his back. As the medical staff worked to place the needle, they unknowingly punctured an artery, and Schindler began to bleed into his chest cavity.

Because the symptoms were so similar to those of the pleurisy,

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"The doctor afterwards essentially said I'm the luckiest person on the planet. I received an insane amount of grace."

JIMMIE SCHINDLER



Provided by Jimmie Schindler
Schindler gives a thumbs up from the hospital during one of his illnesses.



Images of Our Lady of Guadalupe and other religious symbols decorate the interior of all the Guadalupe's locations.

SCHINDLER, from page 8

it went unnoticed. Well, officially unnoticed. Schindler's body noticed, and he began to experience the most excruciating pain of his life. "Dying would be merciful," he later recalled thinking while screaming at the top of his lungs.

As his lungs began to collapse and his pain reached its height, Schindler turned to the only thing he could think to do — something he had trained himself in since his second series of trials. He chose to embrace redemptive suffering.

'Ave Maria!'

Feeling that the only way he could endure such excruciating pain was if it was being used for something good, Schindler chose to offer up his intense suffering for three seemingly hopeless causes: a baby born with half a heart, a friend's relative who had received a terminal diagnosis and an adoptive child caught in the mix of a difficult and potentially dangerous custody situation.

As the medical staff began

draining fluid from his lungs, they noticed signs of internal bleeding and decided to open his chest for exploratory surgery. To do so, seven IVs were placed in Schindler's veins. Six were inserted, but the staff struggled to place a seventh as his veins kept collapsing.

By this time, Schindler had passed out from blood loss. But he shocked a nurse by waking up and immediately noticing the scapular around her neck.

"You must be Catholic!" he said.

"You're awake!" she responded.

"You must be Catholic!" he repeated.

When she confirmed that she was, his next question was, "Have you ever heard of Guadalupe's Mexican Grill?" She hadn't, but she revealed to him that she has a strong devotion to Our Lady and has a tattoo of her on her back. Upon hearing this,

Schindler closed his eyes and said, "Ave Maria!"

The nurse jumped and told him that as soon as he cried out, "Ave Maria," the IV needle went in as needed.

He then passed out again, and the surgery was done.

'Insane Amount of Graces'

That Schindler is alive today is nothing short of God's providence. His internal bleeding had lasted 54 hours. The doctor later told him that he'd never seen anyone live through what Schindler had for more than six hours, nor had he even heard of someone living more than eight.

"The doctor afterwards essentially said I'm the luckiest person on the planet," Schindler told Today's Catholic. He summed up the miracle saying, "I received an insane amount of graces."

Schindler wasn't the only one to receive God's grace. All three intentions for which Schindler had offered his sufferings for during the height of his agony — intentions that seemed hopeless — were fully answered.

And more graces have been heaped upon him. When Schindler was diagnosed with cancer and underwent chemo, he was told he and Katie likely wouldn't be able to have more kids. Yet last year they welcomed their sixth child — a daughter named Bernadette in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes, on whose feast day he was diagnosed. The Marian nod is very fitting for someone who chose to name their restaurant Guadalupe's after Our Lady, and who credits his miraculous healing in part to her intercession.

"The Holy Spirit can use suffering for good. I saw people praying Rosaries ... I even had an atheist friend who started praying."

JIMMIE SCHINDLER



Schindler poses with his family while on a recent vacation.

run Guadalupe's Mexican Grill and is planning to open a new location in South Bend (his undergraduate stomping grounds) in the coming months. But after everything he has endured, he sees the business differently.

"Anything I do now, I'm not really interested unless it advances the [Catholic] cause," he shared.

The restaurants themselves reflect that conviction. Their prevalent Catholic symbols include images and statues of Our Lady, "Viva Cristo Rey!" painted in large print on a wall, and photos of the pope and bishop, as well as a crucifix.

Uniting his business with his faith, the father of six hopes the Holy Spirit will use his restaurant to subtly touch people's hearts for Christ.

He does well to have expectant faith; after all, he has witnessed his redemptive suffering have numerous unexpected ripple effects.

"The Holy Spirit can use suffering for good," he said about his medical ordeal. "I saw people going back to the Church, praying Rosaries. ... I even had an atheist friend who started praying."

But perhaps the deepest change came closer to home. Each night, the Schindler family still gathers to pray, study the Faith and read Scripture together — a sacred routine, born from adversity, that has become a pivotal piece of deepening their faith lives.

For Schindler, his mission is now simple: "My primary role as a dad is to get my kids to heaven."

Everything else — including the restaurant — comes second.



Father Brian Isenbarger blesses a Guadalupe's location before its opening. Provided by Jimmie Schindler

Pope Leo XIV Honors Pope Francis on Death Anniversary

BY OSV NEWS

Flying over the west coast of central Africa on Tuesday, April 21, Pope Leo XIV paused to honor his predecessor on the first anniversary of Pope Francis' death, remembering the Argentine pope's witness to mercy and closeness to the poor.

On the papal flight from Luanda, Angola, to Malabo, the capital of Equatorial Guinea, Pope Leo XIV spoke to journalists traveling with him, reflecting on the legacy of Pope Francis, who died April 21, 2025.

"I would like to remember, on this first anniversary of his death, Pope Francis, who gave so much to the Church with his life, his testimony, his words and his gestures," Pope Leo told reporters, speaking in Italian.

He recalled how Pope Francis truly lived with "closeness to the poorest, the little ones, the sick, the children, the elderly."

"We can also remember his message of mercy," Pope Leo said, remembering in particular how his predecessor invited the entire Church to join in the "beautiful celebration of an extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy."

Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on Decem-



CNS photo/Pablo Esparza

Pope Francis waves as he rides in the popemobile around St. Peter's Square at the Vatican before his weekly general audience in 2024.

ber 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, led the Catholic Church from March 13, 2013, until his death on Easter Monday 2025. He was the first Jesuit pope and the first pope from Latin America.

The late pope's final public appearance was on Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025, when he unexpectedly came out on the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, raising his hands to wave to thousands of faithful gathered below in the square.

"Happy Easter," he told the crowd, before delivering what

would be his last Easter blessing. The visibly frail pope then boarded his popemobile for a final pass through the square to greet the faithful.

"We pray that he is already enjoying the mercy of the Lord, and we thank the Lord for the great gift of Francis' life to the whole Church and to the whole world," Pope Leo said on the flight.

In Rome, the anniversary of Pope Francis' death was marked with a Mass held in the Basilica of St. Mary Major, the final rest-

ing place of the late pope.

Pope Leo reflected on this predecessor's legacy on the papal flight to Equatorial Guinea, the last African country on the pope's 11-day apostolic journey to the continent.

On Easter Monday in 2025, Pope Francis took his final ride in the popemobile, spending about 15 minutes among the crowd in St. Peter's Square. But then, the next morning, which was a major holiday in Italy, church bells tolled the death knell after U.S. Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, chamberlain of the Holy Roman Church, announced that the pope had passed away.

"His whole life was dedicated to the service of the Lord and His Church," Cardinal Farrell said in a video announcement broadcast from the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where Pope Francis lived.

Elected March 13, 2013, Pope Francis was the first pope in history to come from the Southern Hemisphere, the first non-European to be elected in almost 1,300 years and the first Jesuit to serve as successor to St. Peter.

Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, Pope Francis was an untiring voice for peace, urging an end to armed conflict, supporting dialogue and

encouraging reconciliation.

He gave new energy to millions of Catholics as he transformed the image of the papacy into a pastoral ministry based on personal encounters and strong convictions about poverty, mission and dialogue.

He was elected after Pope Benedict XVI retired in 2013. Then-Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio was already a known and respected figure within the College of Cardinals, so much so that no one disputed a respected Italian journal's report that he had received the second-highest number of votes on all four ballots cast in the 2005 conclave that had elected Pope Benedict.

Elected on March 13, 2013, Cardinal Bergoglio chose the name Francis to honor St. Francis of Assisi.

"Go out" was Pope Francis' constant plea to every Catholic, from curial cardinals to the people in the pews. More than once, he told people that while the Bible presents Jesus as knocking at the door of people's hearts to get in, today Jesus is knocking at the doors of parish churches trying to get out and among the people.

Catholic News Service contributed to this report.

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BISHOP RHOADES, from page 1

called the pope “weak on crime, and terrible for Foreign Policy.”

In a statement released on Tuesday, April 14, Bishop Rhoades said he was “disheartened by President Trump’s disparaging words about our Holy Father this past Sunday. Pope Leo XIV is a messenger of the Gospel and, as he himself said, ‘not a politician.’ Of course, our Holy Father is called to be a herald of peace. He is the Vicar of Christ, the Prince of Peace. He has the responsibility as pastor of the universal Church and successor of St. Peter to proclaim the Gospel, to defend human life and dignity, and to advocate for peace among peoples and nations. The Holy Father points us to Our Lord’s teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God” (Mt 5:9). And he reminds us of our moral obligation to seek, promote, and pursue peace and to avoid war. This is indeed a matter of morality about which the Church’s voice needs to be heard.”

The statement continued, saying: “Last week, the Holy Father noted that ‘rejecting the logic of war may lead to misunderstanding and scorn.’ He also explained that the Church ‘proclaims the Gospel of peace and instills obedience to God rather than any human authority, especially when the inherent dignity of other human beings is threatened by continuous violations of international law.’ I am grateful that Pope Leo XIV continues to courageously proclaim the Gospel of peace, even when criticized or ridiculed. Let us pray for our Holy Father, our government leaders, and other leaders of nations. Let us continue to pray for peace in the Middle East and other troubled areas of the world.”

Bishop Rhoades’ statement echoes that of other Church leaders, including Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, who said in a statement he was “disheartened that the President chose to write such disparaging words about the Holy Father.”

A week after Trump’s tweet, Pope Leo pushed back against the media narrative that has pitted him against the president since the start of his 11-day apostolic journey to Africa, telling journalists aboard the papal flight to Angola on Saturday, April 18, that “there has been a certain narrative that has not been accurate in all its aspects.”

“Because of the political situation created when on the first day of the trip, the president of the United States made some comments about myself, much of what has been written since then has been more commentary on commentary trying to interpret what has been said,” Pope Leo said aboard the papal flight from Yaoundé, Cameroon, to Luanda, Angola.

“Just one little example: The talk that I gave at the prayer meeting for peace a couple of days ago was prepared two weeks ago, well before the president ever commented on myself and on the message of peace that I am promoting. And yet as it happens, it was looked at as if I was trying to debate, again, the president, which is not in my interest at all,” he said.

The pope underlined to the roughly 65 journalists aboard the papal plane, including major TV networks and newspapers from around the world, “I primarily come to Africa as a pastor, as the head of the Catholic Church to be with and to celebrate with, to encourage and accompany, all of the Catholics throughout Africa.”

Following Trump’s tweet, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, who discussed Pope Leo in an interview with CBS’ “60 Minutes” that aired on April 12, told OSV News in an April 13 statement that Trump’s “recent statements and actions ... convey a grave misunderstanding of the Holy Father’s ministry and a troubling lack of respect for the faith of millions.”

“Pope Leo serves a higher authority and desires to proclaim the Gospel faithfully and advance the Church’s peaceful mission in a world deeply in need of healing,” he said.

Other fellow leaders rallied around the pope in the wake of Trump’s broadside.

Holy Cross Father Robert A. Dowd, president of the University of Notre Dame, said in an April 13 statement that “Pope Leo XIV continues to proclaim the Gospel of Christ by upholding human dignity and serving as a tireless advocate for peace. His message transcends partisan political divisions in this or any country, and I’m deeply grateful for Pope Leo’s inspiring example. I ask members of the Notre Dame community to pray for peace and work together with all people of goodwill to build a more just and humane world.”

In an April 13 post on X, Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, called Trump’s statements about the pope “entirely inappropriate

and disrespectful.”

“It is the pope’s prerogative to articulate Catholic doctrine and the principles that govern the moral life,” he said. “In regard to the concrete application of those principles, people of goodwill can and do disagree.” Bishop Barron added that the president “owes the pope an apology.”

But when reporters at the White House asked about Bishop Barron’s statement on Monday, April 13, Trump said he had “nothing to apologize for.”

“Pope Leo said things that are wrong, he was very much against what I’m doing with regard to Iran, and you could not have a nuclear Iran, Pope Leo would not be happy with the end result,” Trump said.

Archbishop George Leo Thomas of Las Vegas said in an April 12 statement that he was “grateful to God for sending us Pope Leo XIV, who is willing to speak truth to power just when

we need him the most.”

“Pope Leo is calling for dialogue over diatribe, prayer over politics, and diplomacy above destruction,” said Archbishop Thomas. “We know that he will be unfazed by the president’s ad hominem attacks and sophomoric rhetoric.”

Archbishop Thomas said the pope is “doing what every spiritual leader is called to do — to pray for peace, to call for the protection of helpless civilians, and to plead for world leaders to end mass destruction and armed conflict in every part of the world.”

Trump’s social media tirade against Pope Leo was also compounded by a Truth Social post — delivered 46 minutes later — showing a Christ-like rendering of Trump in white and red robes, laying one glowing hand on a man on a sickbed looking up at him, with Trump’s other hand holding an orb of light. Sur-

rounding the bed were at least four figures appearing to venerate Trump, who was framed by images of the Statue of Liberty, the Lincoln Memorial, the U.S. flag, warplanes, bald eagles, and five heavenly figures in military gear.

“The graphic exploitation of sacred imagery is deeply offensive and undermines the reverence owed to what believers hold most dear,” Cardinal Tobin told OSV News.

Amid the outrage, the AI-generated image was removed from Trump’s Truth Social feed on April 13. The president told reporters the same day that he thought the depiction had been of him “as a doctor making people better and I do make people better. I make people a lot better.”

“I did post it,” he said, “and I thought it was me as a doctor and had to do with the Red Cross.”

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HUMOR IN THE MIX

KEN HALLENIUS

I have a confession to make: I am a trivia guy. I enjoy recalling random facts and sharing them with friends and family, and occasionally these facts are related to what everyone else in the group is talking about at the time.

I've been like this for as long as I can remember, and I attribute it to my parents encouraging me to read as a youngster. We always had a set of World Book Encyclopedias on the shelf in the living room, which I would pore over regularly. I never read through the whole set cover-to-cover, but I'd bet that I read something from each of the alphabetically labeled volumes at one time or another — even the last and thinnest volume, X-Y-Z. We need more facts that start with X.

Recently, my office hosted a trivia night for our students at Notre Dame, and a fellow trivia-addicted co-worker and I were tasked with writing the questions. I set to researching saints, food, and drink, since those are some of



Unsplash

my favorite topics.

Did you know that the legendary Dom Pérignon, whom we associate with champagne, was a real 17th-century Benedictine monk? Or that St. Joseph of Arimathea is the patron saint of morticians and funeral directors because he gave his own tomb for the burial of the Lord Jesus? Or that the Clementine citrus fruit was developed by (and named after) a brother of the

Congregation of the Holy Spirit who ministered at an orphanage in Algeria? Those are facts!

The word “trivia” itself comes from the Latin name to describe the point where three roads would meet. Travelers from different directions would often meet at such points, and they might engage in light conversation. This led to the connotation of “trivial things” being these sorts of exchanges that carried no

great meaning — snippets of facts that seem to be of less importance in the grand scheme of life.

I remember as a kid, not more than 10 or 12 years old, watching a group of adults play Trivial Pursuit for the first time. They were having such fun together, and it delighted me that I knew some of the answers even at that tender age, as I had read about them in the encyclopedias and books that were my constant childhood

companions. I was learning, even if it wasn't in a systematic way.

St. Isidore of Seville, who died in 636 and is counted among the Doctors of the Church, is credited with compiling the first encyclopedia, a compendium of knowledge wherein he quoted more than 200 ancient writers and thinkers and set them in an orderly fashion. His book included discussions of grammar, theology, medicine, geography, law, the physical sciences, agriculture, games, clothing and even how to tie knots and build furniture. His work was the standard textbook in monastic libraries and schools for nearly a thousand years, until the Italian Renaissance.

It might seem odd to us that a bishop would spend his time compiling an encyclopedia, but to him and his contemporaries, the work was a form of evangelization. All creation is an expression of God's abundant goodness, and the Creator delighted in His work from the beginning. As we read in Genesis, God looked upon all that He had made and declared that “it was very good” (1:31). The more we learn and discover about the created world, the more we come to know the One who created and

HALLENIUS, page 13

Like Sheep Need a Shepherd, We Need Christ to Lead and Protect Us



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

Readings from the Acts of the Apostles frequently occur during the Easter season. They clearly show not just life in general in the first Christian community but quite expressly they reveal the special place among the early Christians of the apostles and that Peter was the head of the apostles.

Inevitably, Peter speaks on behalf of all the apostles. Such is the case in this weekend's first reading. Peter preaches. His sermon goes to the heart of the Gospel message. Jesus is Lord, the Savior. He came among humans as human but also as God's own Son. He died. He rose. He reconciled humankind with Almighty God.

Humans have an option: They can accept Jesus as Lord; they can follow the Gospel; or

they can reject Jesus.

The author of Acts, traditionally believed also to have been the author of Luke's Gospel, dates the sermon. It was preached on Pentecost, a Jewish holiday. Jewish holidays celebrated God, in relation with humans and in particular with the Hebrew people. The holidays therefore celebrated the Covenant and God's constant and uninterrupted mercy. In this case, the Jews recalled their special status as the people whom God protected and through whom God was revealed.

The First Epistle of Peter provides the second reading. Jesus died on the cross to bring, forever and without qualification, God and humanity together. Individual persons affirm this reconciliation for themselves by freely accepting Jesus as Lord and by living as the Lord's true disciples, as children of God.

St. John's Gospel, the last reading, presents a theme that was among the Lord's favorites and that always has been beloved by Christians — namely,

the theme of the Good Shepherd.

Today in this country, the imagery may not be as immediately telling as in a rural society. Shepherding is not a common livelihood in America, but at the time of Jesus in the Holy Land, everyone would have been familiar with shepherds and sheep.

The nature of sheep is important. They are docile and quiet, vulnerable to predators such as wolves. They need their shepherds. Also, young sheep or lamb were the preferred animals for sacrifice in the Temple because lambs were gentle and innocent. The meat of lambs was ritually prepared for Passover.

Sheep may wander. The shepherd does not tie them to himself. He leads them, but they can turn away from him.

The Gospel's message is clear. All humans are apt to stray, to be in danger, as sheep without a shepherd to guide and protect them.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, leading us to pastures rich with

nutrition, protecting us from the predators that prowl in search of us — predators that literally kill us by succeeding in tempting us to sin.

Reflection

Several weeks have passed since Easter, but the Church still rejoices in the risen Lord. He lives! Giving us the words once preached by Peter, it calls us to repent, to turn away from sin and to turn to the only source of life, the Lord Jesus.

Preparing us for this message, the Church frankly reminds us of who and what we are. We are as vulnerable as sheep. Predators lurk on every side, waiting to assail us. The devil is the most vicious and crafty of these predators. The devil draws us to death, since sin is death.

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He leads us to the nourishment we need for spiritual health. He guides us to the eternal fields of heaven.

The essence of this weekend's message is clear and simple: We

need the Lord; otherwise, we shall die.

We can follow the Lord, or we can go our own way, just as sheep may wander, but if we turn from Jesus, we walk into peril.

READINGS

Sunday: Acts 2:14, 36-41; Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; 1 Peter 2:20b-25; John 10:1-10

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

Tuesday: Acts 11:19-26; Psalms 87:1b-3, 4-5, 6-7; John 10:22-30

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

Thursday: Acts 13:13-25; Psalms 89:2-3, 21-22, 25 and 27; John 13:16-20

Friday: Acts 13:26-33; Psalms 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11ab; John 14:1-6

Saturday: Acts 13:44-52; Psalms 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4; John 14:7-14

Leo's Response Shows Why He Is a Pope for Our Times



PAPAL WORDS

MICHAEL HEINLEIN

As we approach the one-year anniversary of Pope Leo's election as Roman pontiff on May 8, we continue to learn about the mettle of the man who holds the office. After President Donald Trump's unprecedented, unjustified and deranged April 12 attack on the Vicar of Christ on earth, we have learned a little more.

Departing on a 11-day apostolic visit to Africa on a plane filled with journalists only hours after Trump had posted his barrage of insults on social media, Pope Leo gave a response that served as a welcome balm to the kind of divisive and damaging rhetoric so often employed in our polarized world.

Responding to a reporter, and recorded by OSV News, Pope Leo offered his first response to Trump's comments in what has become his characteristic calm, measured demeanor — one that bespoke truth and the interior freedom to speak that truth. "I have no fear neither of the Trump administration nor speaking out loudly of the message of the Gospel, which is what I believe I am here to do, what the Church is here to do."

Underscoring he is not a politician as Successor of Peter, Pope Leo clearly said he isn't in-

terested in engaging in a debate with Trump on foreign policy and warned that he doesn't believe "the message of the Gospel is meant to be abused in the way that some people are doing." His is a message of peace, he reminded us, in an impressively unflappable response. Which, of course, we knew.

Ever since his first appearance as pope, Leo has resolutely and astutely advanced the Gospel's message of peace. Peace was the very first word the world heard from his voice as pope, as his first greeting was the same as the risen Lord's greeting to the apostles on Easter Sunday: "Peace be with you!" To that end, Pope Leo has been clear in rebuking, in the name of Christ, all war and violence.

As American and Israeli attacks escalated against Iran last month — and were met with force in return — Pope Leo has been increasing his calls for peace, including by holding a prayer vigil for peace at St. Peter's Basilica ahead of his departure for Africa.

Trump's threats, including his Easter Sunday tirade that a "whole civilization will die" if Iran should not meet his demands, heightened the need for Pope Leo to speak ever more forcefully. Pope Leo knows that the healing of the many wounds in our world can only come through following the Gospel and encountering He who is the Prince of Peace.

"I do believe in the message of the Gospel," Pope Leo said

on the plane. "Blessed are the peacemakers' is the message that the world needs to hear today."

As threats to peace and escalations of violence continue across the globe today, Pope Leo is right to use his office to advocate for the peace Christ brings. But even more important than that, Pope Leo has modeled how to respond when an aggressor attacks unjustifiably. Both talking the talk and walking the walk is a rare combination in the world today.

As Pope Leo models for us the importance of authenticity and integrity, particularly vital for one who proclaims the Gospel, we can begin to understand why he chose to first greet the world with a salutation of peace nearly 12 months ago. This is what the world needs today. Pope Leo is truly a pope for our times.

While the great Doctor of the Church St. Augustine is remembered for his articulation of the principles of a just war, he also spoke these valuable words, which perhaps his spiritual son knows well and applied in recent days: "Therefore, even in waging war, cherish the spirit of a peacemaker, that, by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace."

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



SAINT OF THE WEEK

CATHERINE OF SIENA

FEAST DAY: APRIL 29

St. Catherine was the 24th of 25 children of a Sieneze dyer; her mystical experiences and raptures began at age 6. She refused to marry, and around 1367 joined the Third Order of St. Dominic. She attracted a like-minded group in Siena for prayer and good works and devoted her last five years to Church unity and ending the scandal of rival papacies. Though she experienced the pain of the stigmata, it became visible only after her death at age 33. And, in an odd division of relics, her body is in a Roman church, while her head is in a Sieneze church. Named a Doctor of the Church in 1970, Catherine is a patron saint of Europe and Italy and the patron of fire prevention, nurses and nursing.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for April 26, 2026

John 10:1-10

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

NOT ENTER THE SHEEP HEAR LEADS THEM OUT WHO CAME COME DESTROY	SHEEPFOLD GATEKEEPER CALLS AHEAD OF THEM LISTEN GO OUT I CAME	A THIEF OPENS BY NAME A STRANGER WHOEVER TO STEAL ABUNDANTLY
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HE CALL HIS OWN

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

sustains all things.

The work of scientists, engineers, astrophysicists and mathematicians, as much as the reflective work of theologians and philosophers, serves to reveal the splendor of God's creation and to situate our place in it. Many of the great scientists have been people of faith. Father Gregor Mendel, the "father of genetics," was an Augustinian friar. Lise Meitner was an Austrian-Swedish physicist who helped discover the theory of nuclear fission and converted to Lutheranism as an adult. Father Georges Lemaître, a Belgian Catholic priest, is credited with the concept of the "big bang theory" (as in, the beginning of cosmological time and the expansion of the universe, not the popular TV show).

Scientific discoveries and technological advances are not, however, without their challenges, and the Church constantly invites us to reflect on each new development in the light of the Gospel. As Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato Sí*, "our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience.

Each age tends to have only a meager awareness of its own limitations. It is possible that we do not grasp the gravity of the challenges now before us" (No. 105).

All of us have a role to play in our collective reflection upon the great challenges of our day. As Catholics, we have the grace of the sacraments to continually form and reform our hearts, to help us discern the path of charity and truth. In his High Priestly prayer at the Last Supper, Jesus promised to send "the Spirit of truth, He will guide you to all truth" (Jn 16:13).

As the world around us seems to move ever faster and faster with artificial intelligence, self-driving cars and trips to the moon and back, it is never too late to turn to the Spirit of truth and ask for guidance in what we are to do. As St. Francis lay dying in the little chapel he had rebuilt at Christ's invitation, he told his brothers, "I have done what is mine to do; may Christ teach you what is yours." To listen to God's call in our own hearts, and then to do it — that is no trivial matter.

Ken Hallenius and his wife, Julie, are parishioners at St. Joseph Catholic Church in South Bend.

AFRICA, from page 2

crowd had traveled long distances for the occasion. The vitality of Catholicism in Angola is reflected in its numbers. The country counts 2,366 major seminarians and 1,598 minor seminarians preparing for ordained ministry, according to Vatican statistics.

Pope Leo landed in Angola on Saturday, April 18, to begin his three-day visit to the country in southern Africa. His visit comes as Angola continues to grapple with deep social challenges. Despite robust economic growth fueled by oil and diamond revenues, the country ranks among the world's lowest in life expectancy and among the highest in infant mortality. Inequality and corruption remain persistent concerns in the country still healing from a decades-long civil war.

"Dear friends, I have mentioned the material riches upon which powerful interests lay their claim, even within your own country. How much suffering, how many deaths, how many social and environmental disasters are brought about by this logic of extractivism," the pope said in his first speech to Angola's government authorities.

Pope Leo urged Angola's wealthy political leaders to "place the common good before every particular interest, never confusing your own part with the whole."

"The Catholic Church, whose



OSV News photo/Simone Risoluti, Vatican Media
Pope Leo XIV prays as he visits the archaeological site of Hippo Regius in Annaba, Algeria, on Tuesday, April 14.

service to the country I know you greatly esteem, desires to be leaven in the dough and to foster the growth of a just model of coexistence, free from the various forms of slavery imposed by the elite who are laden with much wealth but false joys," he said.

Following Mass on April 19, Pope Leo led tens of thousands of Angolan Catholics in praying the Rosary at the country's most visited Catholic Marian shrine, the Sanctuary of Mama Muxima, which means "Mother of the Heart" in the local Kimbundu language. Local authorities estimated approximately 30,000 pilgrims gathered on the Muxima shrine's esplanade for the recitation of the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary.

"We are in a sanctuary where, for centuries, many men and women have prayed in times

of joy and also in moments of sorrow and great suffering in the history of this country," the pope said in Portuguese. "For a long time now, Mama Muxima has quietly worked to keep the heart of the Church alive and beating."

In the Footsteps of St. Augustine

Pope Leo began his journey in Algeria, where he landed on Monday, April 13, becoming the first pope to make an apostolic journey to the North Africa nation. Speaking to journalists on the flight to Algiers, Pope Leo revealed that his trip to Africa was "meant to be the first trip of the pontificate."

Calling the trip "very special for several reasons," the pope said it is "a blessing for me personally," expressing hope that the visit will also be a blessing "for the Church and the world."



Pope Leo XIV leads the Rosary at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Muxima in Muxima, Angola, on Sunday, April 19.

On the first day of his visit, Pope Leo honored Algeria's Christian martyrs during an evening visit to the Basilica of Our Lady of Africa, highlighting their enduring witness in a predominantly Muslim nation. He said their sacrifice remains "a living seed that never ceases to bear fruit," praising the 19 religious killed in the 1990s civil war, including the Trappist monks of Tibhirine, whose story was depicted in the 2010 French film "Of Gods and Men."

"It is precisely love for their brothers and sisters that inspired the witness of the martyrs we have commemorated," the pope said. "In the face of hatred and violence, they remained faithful to charity even to the point of sacrificing themselves alongside many other men and women, Christians and Muslims."

The pope, a member of the Augustinian order, celebrated Mass on Tuesday, April 14, at the basilica built near the site where St. Augustine died nearly 1,600 years ago.

"Here the martyrs prayed; here St. Augustine loved his flock, fervently seeking the truth and serving Christ with ardent faith," the pope said in his homily, which he delivered in French. "Be heirs to this tradition, bearing witness through fraternal charity to the freedom of those born from above as a hope of salvation for the world."

In the Wake of Violence

Pope Leo XIV arrived in Cameroon on Wednesday, April 15, urging peace in a country marked by separatist conflict. Addressing civil leaders in Yaoundé, he said he came "as a shepherd and as a servant of dialogue, fraternity and peace," underlining that "there is such a hunger and thirst for justice" in the country.

Sitting next to Cameroonian authoritarian President Paul Biya, Pope Leo described the toll of violence since 2017, saying, "Lives have been lost, families displaced,

children deprived of schooling and young people no longer see a future," adding, "behind the numbers are the faces, stories and shattered hopes of real people."

Just days before the pope's visit, separatists announced a temporary ceasefire. Pope Leo stressed that peace "is everyone's responsibility, beginning with civil authorities."

On the evening of April 15, Pope Leo XIV brought joy to 64 orphaned and abandoned children when he visited the Ngul Zamba orphanage in Cameroon, blessing the children and assuring them that despite their suffering, Jesus "cares especially for children like you."

The orphanage, whose name means "the power of God" in the Ewondo language, is run by the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary and currently houses children ranging in age from 3 to 20 years old.

"Dear children, I know that many of you have endured difficult trials," the pope told the children, speaking in French. "Some of you have known the pain of loss through the death of parents or loved ones. Others have experienced fear, rejection, abandonment, deprivation and uncertainty. Yet, you are called to a future that is greater than your wounds."

On Thursday, April 16, Pope Leo delivered a forceful call for peace during an emotional gathering in Bamenda. Among those addressing the pope was Sister Carine Tangiri Mangu, who recalled being kidnapped by separatists and held for three days without food or sleep. She said constant prayer of the Rosary sustained their hope.

At St. Joseph's Cathedral, the pope declared, "I am here to proclaim peace," while condemning those who profit from war and exploit religion for violence. Pope Leo encouraged leaders in the country and the faithful to remain hopeful, insisting that God has not abandoned them.



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SUNDAY, APRIL 26

Sabbath Sunday

10 – 4 p.m.

MISHAWAKA – Young adult women (college age and older) are invited to the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration for a retreat day to enjoy Sabbath rest, prayer and community. Register in advance at: ssfpa.org/events/sabbath-sunday-womens-retreat.

FRIDAY, MAY 1 and SATURDAY, MAY 2

Most Precious Blood School Presents "Aladdin Jr."

7 – 9 p.m.

FORT WAYNE – Most Precious Blood school, 1529 Barthold St., will present their annual spring musical "Aladdin Jr." Performances both nights begin at 7p.m. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$3 for students.

SATURDAY, MAY 2

Women's Mini Spiritual Retreat

8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

FORT WAYNE – The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception is sponsoring a women's spiritual mini-retreat at the Cathedral Center, 1102 South Clinton St. Come spend the morning listening to and reflecting on the voices of women as they encounter Jesus in the Scriptures. Attendees are asked to bring a Bible. Attendance is free, but a free-will donation to support the Cathedral's Project Help is welcomed. Please register by April 26 at parishsecretary@cathedralfw.org.

Holy Cross Sister Joanne Bauer Dies at Age 84

BY TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Sister Joanne Bauer dedicated 43 of her 63 years as a professed Sister of the Holy Cross to education and maintaining a positive presence in the lives of college students. She understood the importance of her ministry, as she once wrote, "As a Sister of the Holy Cross whose roots are closely bound to the University of Notre Dame, my entire life has been spent in service of students, enabling their personal development and realization of what it means for us to be members of the Body of Christ." Her love for education and working with students was evident in her conscientious teaching style, and it shaped the rest of her life as a Holy Cross sister.



Born on March 28, 1941, Joanne Dee Bauer was raised in a loving, tight-knit family. She grew up in Fresno, California, with her parents, Harold and Villa (Donahue), and three younger siblings.

Joanne entered the Sisters of the Holy Cross in South Bend on September 4, 1960. She was a freshman at the College of the Holy Names in Oakland at the time of her entrance. Upon

reception of the holy habit, she became Sister Marie Harold, bearing her father's name.

As Sister Marie Harold, she held two degrees by the time she began her active ministry. In 1964, she earned her bachelor's degree in English literature from Saint Mary's College South Bend and then a master's degree in English and journalism from the University of Notre Dame the following year. She taught at elementary schools in Califor-

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne
Dorothy Buckenmeyer, 96, St. Vincent de Paul
Norbert Freiburger, 75, St. Vincent de Paul

Mishawaka
Frank Walerko, 101, Queen of Peace

South Bend
Louis "Sam" Vittorie, 75, Christ the King

Send obituaries to obituaries@diocesefwsb.org.

nia and Arizona throughout the final years of the 1960s and returned to her baptismal name by the end of the decade. The 1970s marked her transition to teaching in high schools in California.

The 21 years Sister Joanne devoted to her college campus ministry began at the University of Texas in Austin in 1985. Sister Joanne was a presence at several colleges and universities, including the University of San Francisco, the University of California at San Francisco, the University of Southern California, the University of Notre Dame and the St. Paul Catholic Newman Center in Fresno. Sister Joanne's roles varied over the years on these campuses. She was a campus minister, pastoral minister, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults director, Catholic Student Association adviser, residence hall rectress and director of campus ministry.

Her final assignment was to serve the Diocese of Fresno as a family life ministry coordinator. For 11 years, she networked with pastors, parishes and family life organizations and informed them about potential legislation that advocated for life, marriage and family.

She remained in Fresno until 2019, when she transitioned to a ministry of prayer and moved to the motherhouse at Saint Mary's in South Bend. Although her health declined in the first months of 2026, she remained as friendly as she ever was. Sister Joanne died in the evening of March 17, making her final journey home to God just 11 days before her 85th birthday.

May she rest in peace.

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FRANCISCANS OF MARY, from page 1

of Mary, which was founded in 1988 in Madrid by Father Santiago Martín. Following in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, the community is also known as the Missionaries of Gratitude, emphasizing a spirituality rooted in thanksgiving to God. Bishop Rhoades invited the community to serve in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend after learning about them in 2018. Father Ramos and Father Alven Fabiolas Salada arrived in the summer of 2019, serving at St. Gaspar del Bufalo in Rome City and St. Joseph in LaGrange.

Following the renewal of vows, Bishop Rhoades bestowed the religious habit upon Father Ramos, Father Marroquín and Father Sis, saying, "Receive this garment, the sign of your consecration, and preserve inwardly that faith in the Lord which your sacred habit outwardly proclaims."

The dark gray Franciscan habit, worn with a white cord and a Tau-shaped cross bearing an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, reflects both simplicity and mission. The cord includes four knots symbolizing the traditional vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, along with the fourth vow of fidelity to the pope.

In his homily, Bishop Rhoades emphasized the centrality of prayer in the life of every Christian, especially those in consecrated life.

"One of the things I love about the Franciscans of Mary is their dedication to prayer," Bishop Rhoades said. "It is the heart of their community life. ... I know how busy Fathers Osman, Raul and Jorge are, serving at St. Anthony and St. Joseph parishes and also at St. Paul Chapel. Yet, busy as they are, they know that for their ministry to be effective and to bear fruit, they need to be men of prayer."

He also pointed to the Beatitudes as the foundation of Christian discipleship and the path to holiness.

"We have all heard today's Gospel of the Beatitudes many times," Bishop Rhoades said. "The Beatitudes ... show us the way to true happiness. They are meant for all of us. ... They are the path that leads to the kingdom of heaven."

Following the Mass, the priests expressed their gratitude for the celebration and for the people they serve.

In his brief comments, Father Sis, a native of Guatemala who was ordained a priest in 2023, shared a reflection from Pope Benedict XVI when the pontiff marked the 60th anniversary of

his priesthood. "He picked just one key word ... 'thanks.' This is the word that I want to say to you all here — thanks. Thanks be to God, thanks to Bishop Rhoades, thanks to my brother priests, thanks to all of you who are here with us tonight to share this joy."

Father Marroquín, a fellow Guatemala native who was ordained to the priesthood in 2021, reflected on humility and vocation, giving the crowd a laugh as he shared the story of a student at nearby Trine University who once told the small-in-stature priest that no longer was he the shortest person at St. Anthony.

"Our Blessed Virgin Mary said something like this when she was saying words of gratitude to the Lord in the Magnificat: 'I proclaim the greatness of the Lord because He has looked with favor on the lowliness' — or shortness — 'of the Almighty's servant,'" Father Marroquín said. "And this is what I feel today as I was calling to mind my way to religious life and the priesthood — my smallness, my littleness in the great hands of our good Lord. So, I thank Him, and I thank all of you for being here. And I'm so blessed and happy today to be able to share this small thing."

Father Ramos, pastor of St. Anthony and St. Joseph parishes, who hails from Nicaragua, also said the day was one of thanksgiving — even more so in the midst of special jubilee years, including the 800th anniversary of St. Francis' death, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, and the upcoming celebration of the 10th anniversary of his own priestly ordination.

"When people ask me, 'Are you happy, Father?' Father Ramos said, "I answer them, 'No, I am not happy; I am fully happy!' He continued, saying, "That is why I believe that today is a day not to make petitions, but it is a day to give thanks for the many blessings that we have received, most especially for those people who made this day possible and very beautiful."

Before the final blessing and allowing the crowd to gather for a festive reception afterward, Father Ramos concluded by saying: "If I may ask just one thing of you, it is this: Please pray for our sanctification. ... Please pray so that we, your priests, be holy to help you be holy — so that you love Jesus with all your heart. That is the most important mission we must fulfill here as missionaries."

Scott Warden is editor-in-chief of Today's Catholic. Email him at editor@todayscatholic.org.



Photos by Scott Warden

Bishop Rhoades poses with, from left, Father Osman Ramos, Father Jorge Sis, and Father Raul Marroquín.



Father Osman Ramos hugs a fellow priest of the Franciscans of Mary during Mass at St. Anthony of Padua in Angola.



Wearing their new habits, the three priests stand together at the conclusion of Mass on Wednesday, April 15.