FORT WAYNE — The Rite of Election of Catechumens and the Call of Candidates to Continuing Conversion were celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne on Sunday, March 13. On March 20, the Second Sunday of Lent, these rites will be held in St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend, at 2 p.m.

Catechumens are those unbaptized people who will be entering the Catholic Church by receiving the sacraments of initiation — Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist — at the Easter Vigil on the night of April 23. Candidates are those who are already baptized people who will be entering the Catholic Church by receiving the sacraments of initiation. Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist — at the Easter Vigil on the night of April 23. Candidates are those who are already baptized and are now preparing to complete their initiation and enter into full communion with the Catholic Church.

The catechumens and candidates were from Fort Wayne and parishes in the eastern portion of the diocese. All together over 450 catechumens and candidates from throughout the diocese are expected for the two liturgies.

At the liturgy, each catechumen was called by name and came forward with his or her godparent for recognition by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades during the Rite of Election. Every parish presented a Book of the Elect containing the names of all the catechumens from that parish to be signed by Bishop Rhoades.

Prayerful discussion enjoyed at Diocesan Marriage Conference

FORT WAYNE — Seventy area couples enjoyed a day of reflection, prayer and examination of the state of marriage in general and their own relationship in particular during the Diocesan Marriage Conference Saturday on the North Campus of the University of Saint Francis.

Presenters for the event were Greg and Julie Alexander, marriage ministers and founders of The Alexander House, an international Catholic apostolate focused on marriage.

In introducing themselves, the Alexanders related an all-too-familiar story of the early years of their marriage when a focus on the external trappings of successful careers, a good income, a nice car and a big house — acquisitions associated with status — threatened to destroy their relationship. They thought there was no solution but divorce when a wise priest to whom they went for guidance advised them to seek out God’s plan for marriage before ending their own. The couple searched Scripture, the catechism and Church documents for answers and in doing so found the Church’s vision for the sacrament. At that point, Greg and Julie prayed together for the first time, asking God to restore their relationship. They both quit their jobs, sold their house and their possessions and opened themselves to God’s plan.

They realized then that many other couples are living within the sacrament of Marriage but have no true idea of God’s plan for it and pledged to help others make the same discovery they have through this marriage ministry. “If we aren’t fully participating with God in the sacrament, we’re not truly happy,” said Greg.

We realized that the true purpose of Marriage according to God’s plan is to give each other a foretaste of heaven, said Julie. It

POPE’S NEW BOOK SEEN AT VATICAN PRESS OFFICE

Catechumens and godparents from parishes across the diocese come forward to be greeted by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

Rhoades, having participated in this rite, the catechumens are now referred to as the “elect,” because they have been officially declared ready to receive the Easter sacraments this year.

Then, after the Rite of Election, the candidates were called forward as part of the Call to Continuing Conversion and were escorted by their sponsors to greet Bishop Rhoades. Catechumens Lindsey McCaffrey is 12 years old and from the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. She desires to enter the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil in imitation of her mother and grandmother, who are practicing Catholics.

Ashley Mathews from St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Fort Wayne, beamed with excitement as she said the Rite of Election Sunday, March 13, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. Priests and other parish directors of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults look on during the signing of the books, which include the names of the catechumens from individual parishes.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades signs the Books of the Elect at the Rite of Election held Sunday, March 13, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. Priests and other parish directors of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults look on during the signing of the books, which include the names of the catechumens from individual parishes.

A godparent and a catechumen's shoulder at the conclusion of the Rite of Election.
In book, pope presents Jesus as reconciler, not political revolutionary

BY JOHN THAVIS

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In his new volume on “Jesus of Nazareth,” Pope Benedict XVI presents the passion and resurrection of Christ as history-changing events that answer humanity’s unceasing need to be reconciled with God.

Published March 10, the 394-page book, titled “Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week — From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection” was to be officially presented at the Vatican March 10, but excerpts from three chapters were released March 2.

Without the resurrection, the pope said, Jesus would be merely “a failed religious leader.”

The pope said some of the strongest evidence for the authenticity of the resurrection was to be found in the Scripture accounts of the disciples’ encounters with the risen Christ. In Jesus is presented as being present physically, yet not bound by physical laws, and is not immediately recognized. All of this is presented “clumsily” in the Gospel narratives, which make them all the more credible, reflecting the disciples’ genuine amazement, he said.

“It is important that the encounters with the risen Lord are not just interior events or mystical experiences — they are real encounters with the living One who is now embodied in a new way,” he said. After His resurrection, Jesus was not a “ghost” or a mere “resuscitated corpse,” but one who has entered a new life in the power of God, the pope said. This comes through clearly in the Gospel accounts, he said.

The pope then asks whether modern men and women can put their faith in a new, credible Jesus. “Enlightened” thinking would say no; he said. Science would seem to rule it out; but science has its limits, he said.

In fact, he said, the resurrection does not contradict science but speaks of something outside our world of experience, a further dimension. He then posed a series of questions to underline that a new space of being in union with God. “As such, the resurrection was an event that broke out of history yet ‘left a footprint within history,’” the pope said.

In his latest volume of “Jesus of Nazareth,” Pope Benedict XVI says the condemnation of Christ had complex political and religious causes and cannot be blamed on the Jewish people as a whole. “Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week — From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection” was to be officially presented at the Vatican March 10, but excerpts from three chapters were released March 2.

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As Japan disaster unfolds, world’s Catholics offer prayers, help

TOKYO (CNS) — As the magnitude of the disaster in Japan unfolded, religious and humanitarian aid organizations stepped up efforts to provide assistance.

The earthquake was followed by tsunamis that wiped out entire cities and by fears of catastrophe at nuclear power stations damaged in the quake. Government officials estimated that tens of thousands of people lost their lives.

The Diocese of Sendai includes the areas hardest-hit in the disaster, reported the Asian Church news agency UCA News.

Father Peter Shiro Komatsu, diocesan chancellor, said March 14 that Bishop Martin Tetsuo Hiraga of Sendai was unharmed but had not received complete reports on the damage because telecommunications remained disrupted.

The priest said diocesan officials did not know about what had happened to several churches along the coast. He said one church in Fukushima was totally damaged and eight churches in Sendai were either unaffected or only slightly damaged.

The diocese said Father Andre Lachapelle of the Quebec Foreign Mission Society had died en route from Sendai to his church about nine miles away. There were conflicting reports of whether he suffered a heart attack or was lost in a tsunami.

Niigata Bishop Isao Kikuchi, president of Caritas Japan, said, “We have received so many e-mails from all continents, filled with words of compassion and prayer. We are very grateful for this solidity. We believe that aid activity is needed, but prayer is also important in such a situation.”

Pope Benedict XVI was among those sending his prayers.

The U.S. bishops’ Catholic Relief Services was working with Caritas Japan. A CRS spokeswoman said her agency was ready to help in other Asian countries where it already worked.

In a statement, Caritas Japan said it would concentrate its efforts on meeting the needs of people with no access to public services and on the rehabilitation phase of recovery.

In Manila, Philippines, the leak of radioactivity and explosions at the damaged Fukushima nuclear power station prompted renewed calls for the government to abandon any plans to use nuclear energy for power generation in the Philippines.

Bishop Deogracias Iniguez, head of the public affairs committee of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, said the church has been proven right in consistently opposing the revival of the nuclear facility. “I think they should intentionally follow what is happening in Japan,” he told the Philippine bishops’ news agency.

“We have long been opposing it due to its possible negative effects in the country.”

The Salesians, who lost 250 children and adults at one school during the January 2010 Haitian earthquake, reported that most of the other convents, schools and churches were south of Tokyo and incurred only minor damage. The Salesian news agency reported from Tokyo that there was no news from one house in Natori, in the quake zone.

The Caritas of Jesus reported all their sisters were safe, but the Salesian news agency said some students were missing from the nursery in Fukushima.

UCA News reported that Catholics in mainland China were among Asian Catholics who expressed solidarity with the earthquake victims in Japan and added prayers to their Masses March 13. Jinde Charities in northern China’s Hebei province also offered an initial $50,000 to support Caritas Japan’s relief efforts.

In Seoul, South Korea, Cardinal Nicholas Cheong Jin-suk offered prayers and an initial $50,000. Korean Protestants and Buddhists also offered prayers.

Pope Benedict prays for victims of disaster in Japan, sends aid

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Saying he, too, was horrified by the images of the death and destruction caused by the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, Pope Benedict XVI asked people to join him in praying for the victims.

“May the bereaved and injured be comforted and may the rescue workers be strengthened in their efforts to assist the courageous Japanese people,” the pope said in English March 13 after reciting the Angelus prayer with visitors at St. Peter’s Square.

Government officials estimated that perhaps 10,000 people lost their lives after the earthquake March 11 and the tsunami it triggered.

Speaking in Italian after the Angelus, the pope said, “The images of the tragic earthquake and the consequent tsunami in Japan have left us deeply horrified. “I want to renew my spiritual closeness to that country’s dear people, who with dignity and courage are dealing with the consequences of the calamity. I pray for the victims and their families and for all who are suffering because of these terrible events. I encourage all those who, with laudable speed, are working to bring help. Let us remain united in prayer.”

The Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Vatican’s charity promotion and coordinating office, announced March 14 that the pope donated $100,000 to the relief efforts of the Japanese bishops’ conference.

“Obviously, material, concrete aid is necessary” to help the thousands who are suffering, Mgr. Anthony Figureirode, a Cor Unum official, told Vatican Radio. “Also, the bishops are the first responsible for charity in the diocese and they know the needs of the people.”

“The Church wants to be there not only in the short term but especially in the long term,” after “many of the secular agencies have gone and there’s no one to help,” he said.

Bishop Marcellino Daji Tani of Saitama, one of the dioceses hit hardest by the disaster, told the Catholic missionary news agency Fides that the catastrophe is a reminder that “life is in the hands of God and that life is a gift from God,” and he described the tragedy as a challenge for Christians during Lent “to practice and witness to the commandment of love and brotherly love.”

However, he also told Fides, “Of particular concern to us is the situation of the nuclear power plant in Fukushima. But we must take courage, with the help of the Holy Spirit.”

Two reactors at the Fukushima plant were hit by explosions and another was losing its cooling system. Japanese officials were playing down the health risks posed by the emergency at the plant, but they did order evacuations for hundreds of thousands of people.

Bishop Martin Tetsuo Hiraga of Sendai, the diocese most affected by the quake and tsunami, said many area residents, cut off with-out electricity and with some phone service just restored, were unaware of the worsening situation at the Fukushima plant.

“You living in other countries have a much better idea of the tragedy,” the bishop told Vatican Radio March 15.

“We are terrified,” the bishop said. “We only have the government announcements, we have no other information of the nuclear power station. We don’t even know what has happened to our parishes in the towns and villages along the coast. We have no way of contacting them. I can only hope that the people of my diocese can stand together and be strong enough to overcome this disaster.”

Meanwhile, the director of Caritas Japan told Fides, “This painful event may be an opportunity to spread the values of the Gospel, that is, the fraternity of all men and women, the building of common good, the recognition that every person has the dignity of a child of God and is important in the eyes of God.

“If with our work and our witness, we can communicate that then from this evil will come good,” the Caritas official, Father Daisuke Narui, told Fides.

Sara Angle contributed to this story.
To ‘form and inform’ on public policy; ensure public good is served

INDIANAPOLIS — Why is the Church involved in public policy? The short answer, “to form and inform,” said Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) executive director.

“The role of the ICC is twofold,” said Tebbe. “Our role is to bring Church teachings to the public square where appropriate. Secondly, our role is to assist in forming the consciences of our faith community, to act as liaison by informing people in the pew what’s going on, and to help them take part in the political process.”

“The overall goal of the Church in the public square is to promote the public good,” said Tebbe.

In 2007 the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement called, Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility, outlining the Church’s and its members’ role in the political process.

It states: “The Church’s obligation to participate in shaping the moral character of society is a requirement of our faith. It is a basic part of the mission we have received from Jesus Christ, who offers a vision of life revealed to us in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.”

The document continues: “The Catholic community enters public life not to impose sectarian doctrine but to act on our moral convictions, to share our experience in serving the poor and vulnerable, and to participate in the dialogue over our nation’s future.”

Sen. John Broden, D-South Bend, said, “Advocacy groups as a whole do play a very important role and serve as an important informational tool for lawmakers. They bring a certain expertise in an area. In the case of the Catholic conference, they are able to bring the well-thought-out, well-articulated positions of the Church.”

“In terms of advocacy groups, I can’t tell you how important a role these groups play,” said Broden. “We are a part-time legislature. We can’t tell you how important a role advocacy groups play.”

“I am an attorney,” he said. “There are certain areas of expertise that I bring because of my profession. But there are a full range of issues that quite frankly I don’t have the expertise on. So again, we rely as legislators on these groups, and you learn to discern which informational groups provide honest, straightforward information that will enlighten and enhance your ability to analyze issues and some groups that don’t have that reputation.”

“Obviously, I would put the Catholic conference undoubtedly in the category of providing exceptional information with respect to particular bills and issues that the legislators face,” he said. “The Indiana Catholic Conference plays an indispensable role in educating lawmakers.”

Jesuit Father Jim Dixon, ICC diocesan coordinator for the Gary Diocese, said, “ICC gives Catholics a very hands-on way of making their commitment to the Church as it bears on ethical and moral convictions, to share our experience in serving the poor and vulnerable, and to participate in the dialogue over our nation’s future.”

“I am an attorney,” he said. “Being an ICC coordinator gives me a practical, useful tool for working with the Catholics, especially those on peace-and-justice committees who are seeking works of justice and social change. It is one of the most important things I do in this office,” said Father Dixon.

Fred Everett, ICC diocesan coordinator for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, said, “The ICC brings the wisdom of the Church as it bears on ethical and public policy issues. If legislators are wondering where the Church is on an issue or what Christian principles apply, they know to contact Glenn Tebbe. In addition, other pro-life, pro-family, pro-immigrant, pro-poor and pro-education groups can look to the conference for guidance.”

Everett said, “I enjoy the interaction with legislators and others on public policy matters. The process, however, is not always a pretty one. I am often reminded of the saying commonly attributed to Bismarck that ‘laws are like sausages — it’s better not to know how they are made’!”

Since 1967, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) has been the official representative for the Church on both state and national issues. It consists of a board of directors, professional staff, diocesan coordinators and interested Catholics who want to participate in the public policy arena. The board includes the bishop and one layperson from each of the five Indiana dioceses.

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Religious leaders urge Congress to remember poor in budget debate

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic and other religious leaders commanding the House and Senate are urging members of Congress to remember the needs of the poor while they debate the federal budget.

“The spending choices of Congress have clear moral and human dimensions; they reflect our values as a people,” said Bishop Stephen E. Elkins of Stockton, Calif., chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

“These current proposals call for substantial reductions, particularly in those programs that serve the poorest and most vulnerable people in our nation. In a time of economic crisis, poor and vulnerable people are in greater need of assistance, not less,” Elkins said in a March 8 letter to the U.S. Senate. He reiterated a similar plea he made in a Feb. 14 letter to the House. The bishop cited more than $5 billion in proposed cuts to programs for those in need, including community health centers, affordable housing, job training programs, education programs for low-income people and refugee funding.

He said the need to address the federal deficit must be done through shared sacrifice — not by creating greater insecurity for the poor.

He also voiced support for provisions that continue to ban federal abortions funding and restrict the ban in the District of Columbia.

Maryland same-sex marriage bill is dead for rest of legislative session

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (CNS) — A bill to legalize same-sex marriage in Maryland is effectively dead for the year after a member of the House of Delegates asked that it be reconsidered by the House Judiciary Committee March 11. The move came at the end of a passionate and lengthy debate on the floor of the House of Delegates.

Delegate David Brinkley, R-Baltimore County, and did not have to vote on a motion that the House had already rejected.

The vote came on a motion that the House had already rejected March 8. The bill's sponsors said the decision was not about the measure itself, but an attempt to change the rules of the Legislature.

But Brinkley said he was not satisfied with the results.

The bill had its first reading March 8, but was tabled for further consideration.

He said the bill did not have the support of a majority of delegates, and that the vote was simply a way to get the bill out of the way.

The bill was a response to the Supreme Court's decision in 2013 to strike down a federal law that defined marriage as between one man and one woman. It was introduced in January and quickly passed the House and Senate.

Believers Against the Death Penalty call for end to use of capital punishment

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Believers Against the Death Penalty (BAP) is calling for an end to the death penalty in the United States.

The group, which is made up of members of the Catholic Church, said in a statement that the death penalty is a violation of the dignity of the human person.

“The death penalty is a violation of the human dignity of the person,” the statement said.

The group called for an end to the death penalty and for the establishment of a moratorium on executions.

The statement also called for the establishment of a commission to study the issue of the death penalty and for the development of a plan for the rehabilitation of those sentenced to life in prison.

Catholic leaders say repeal of death penalty advances ‘culture of life’

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (CNS) — The repeal of the death penalty “advances the development of a culture of life in our state,” the Catholic Conference of Illinois said March 9.

“In the wake of the newest news, we are reminded of the importance of the death penalty,” the conference said.

The conference said that the death penalty is a violation of the dignity of the human person and a violation of the principles of justice and human rights.

The conference also called for an end to the death penalty and for the establishment of a moratorium on executions.

Catholic clergy and religious take part in ceremony upon the arrival of the relics of St. Therese of Lisieux at Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv, Israel, March 14.

The saint’s relics will travel to various spots in Israel and the Palestinian territories over the next few months. St. Therese, a young French Carmelite who died in 1897, is also known as the Little Flower. She is well loved for her example of simple and practical spirituality.

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Bishop Dwenger High School reports merit scholarship recipients

FORT WAYNE — The faculty, staff and administration of Bishop Dwenger High School has announced the names of incoming ninth-grade students who have received the James E. Robinson Merit Scholarship Exam. They have received scholarships for the 2011-12 school year to Bishop Dwenger High School.

Incoming freshmen students and their current schools include the following: Taylor Burke, Most Precious Blood; Jared Deminger, St. Jude; Riley Delaney, St. Jude; Cameron Kahlenbeck, Most Precious Blood; Lucie Ly, St. Charles; Emily Miller, St. Jude; Adam Murphy, St. Vincent; Alexander O’Connor, St. Vincent; Kelley O’Shaughnessy, St. Vincent; Genevieve Reth, St. Vincent; Mary Richter, St. Charles; Thomas Roosler, St. Vincent; Audrey Sanfrey, St. Jude; Samuel Schenkel, St. Vincent; Gloria Tippmann, Indian Springs Middle School; Joseph Veracco, St. Vincent; and Grant Vorol, St. Vincent.

Run, Panther Run 5K Run and Walk

SOUTH BEND — St. Anthony de Padua Catholic Church and School will hold the third annual Run, Panther, Run on Saturday, April 16. The event will feature a 5K Run, a 5K and Stroller Walk along with a One Mile Fun Run. The event will begin at the large pavilion at Potawatomi Park, proceed south through IUSBF, follow the St. Joseph River and return via the same route to the park. The post-race celebration will be held at the St. Anthony School Gym, 2310 E. Jefferson St., South Bend. The celebration will feature awards, food, refreshments, music and massages. The race begins at 9 a.m.

Each participant will receive a tech shirt and tote bag. Early registration is encouraged as a discount is provided. Registrations may be submitted at the school or parish office or mailed to St. Anthony de Padua, 2310 E. Jefferson Blvd., South Bend, IN 46615, Attn.: HASA Run. All events are open to all ages. Late registration can be made up to the morning of the run beginning at 7:30 a.m. with the run beginning at 9 a.m.

Run, Panther. Run proceeds benefit tuition assistance for children in need. For more information about how to participate in the run e-mail run@stanthonysb.org. Registration forms, an interactive race map and other information are available at www.stanthonysb.org.

Sacred Heart holds parish mission

WARSAW — Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw will hold its parish mission, titled “Falling in Love with God,” from March 27-31. Each evening’s program will begin at 7 p.m.

An old friendship was renewed at Saint Anne Home in Fort Wayne on Sunday, March 6, when Archbishop Albert LeGland, of the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface, Manitoba, Canada celebrated the 10:30 a.m. Mass and visited Saint Anne’s resident, Father Robert Yast. Their friendship began in August 2000 when Father LeGland spent a year at the University of Notre Dame working on a masters degree in pastoral liturgy. In 2001, Father Yast attended the ordination of Father LeGland as bishop of the Diocese of Saskatchewan.

Speakers and topics include the following: Sunday, March 27 — Father Neil Wack, pastor of Christ the King Parish in South Bend, the Eucharist; Monday, March 28 — Father Thomas Shoemaker, pastor of St. Jude in Fort Wayne, prayer; Tuesday, March 29 — Bishop Emeritus John M. D’Arcy, Reconciliation, Wednesday, March 30 — Mrgr. Bernard Galic, pastor of St. Aloysius in Yoder, faith; Thursday, March 31 — Father Mark Gurtner, pastor of St. Anthony de Padua in South Bend, eternal life.

Sacred Heart Parish is located at 125 North Harrison, Warsaw.

Saint Mary’s College’s dance marathon a success

NOTRE DAME — More than 500 students from Saint Mary’s College, Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame packed Angela Athletic Facility to dance in the 12-hour Dance Marathon for Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis Saturday, March 5. This year’s marathon, which is organized and put on by Saint Mary’s students, raised nearly $63,500 for the hospital.

Since its inception in 2006, the Saint Mary’s College Dance Marathon has raised over $380,000 for the hospital. The Saint Mary’s students’ efforts recently earned special recognition. Last month a room in the newly opened Riley Hospital Simon Family Tower was named in honor of the Saint Mary’s students’ efforts.

“It really is an honor to know that a room is named for our Dance Marathon,” said Katie Fadden, president of Dance Marathon at Saint Mary’s. “Dance Marathon began at the college six years ago by students who saw a need to help a children’s hospital better meet the needs of sick kids. Our students felt passionate about the cause then, and that passion is still strong.”

Fourteen local children treated at Riley and their families attended the marathon.

Notre Dame Club holds Rockne Mass, breakfast

NOTRE DAME — The 80th Annual Rockne Mass and Breakfast will be held Sunday, March 27, Sponsored by the Notre Dame Club of St. Joseph Valley, the Mass will be at 9:30 a.m. in the Dillon Hall Chapel. Breakfast will follow at 10:30 a.m. in McKenna Hall, the Center for Continuing Education.

Jerry McKenna, renowned sculptor whose works are not only on the Notre Dame campus, but also at the College Football Hall of Fame, and around the globe, will be the speaker.

Reservations are required by March 23, by calling the Notre Dame Alumni Office at (574) 631-6000. Tickets are payable at the door and are $15 for adults and $7 per child under the age of 10.

Saint Mary’s College to celebrate the Education of Women in Science

NOTRE DAME — With a heritage of nearly 150 years of educating women in science, Saint Mary’s College will host a series of events on Saturday, March 26, titled “Celebrating the Education of Women in Science.” All events are free and open to the public and are ideal for students, seventh grade and above high school students, who are interested in a career in science, as well as high school science faculty and professional scientists, nurses, physicians or others in science related fields. The keynote address will be given by Sharon A. Norton, Ph.D., director of development at The Mathile Institute for the Advancement of Human Nutrition. Her talk, titled “The Making of a Scientist” will offer young women a look at a a career path, which led to a rewarding career where she is now helping to eradicate world hunger.

The conference will take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Science Hall and Madeleva Hall. The afternoon will end with a major announcement from the College.

NYT journalist and Wilson Fellow visits USF to discuss education

FORT WAYNE — Woodrow Wilson Fellow for 2011 and former New York Times education editor and reporter Karen Arenson will give two presentations at the University of Saint Francis (USF) campus this month. The presentations are free to the public.

On Tuesday, March 22, Arenson will participate in the panel discussion, “Shift Happens: Careers and Vocations in the 21st Century,” from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Doermer Family Center for Health Science Education room 156A. USF Assistant Provost Dr. Andrew Prall will moderate the discussion between Arenson and university faculty members Frank Connor, Joe Steensma and Conmie Collins.

The panel will examine the responsibility of colleges and universities to prepare young American students to meet the challenges of an ever changing nation and world, with complexities such as rising gasoline prices, Middle East revolutions, and the flight of Midwest state lawmakers from their legislative floors.

On Thursday, March 24, Arenson will present “Money for Nothing? Higher Education in America” from 6:30-8 p.m. in Doermer Center room 156B-A.

Her discussion will focus on the past, present and future of higher education, based on her 30 years in economics and higher education news and her service as a trustee at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

St. Vincent de Paul holds parish mission

FORT WAYNE — St. Vincent de Paul Church, located at 1502 E. Wallen Rd. in Fort Wayne, will hold its parish mission, “Walking by Faith,” on March 28, 29 and 30 from 6:30-8 p.m. each evening. Franciscan Father David Mary Enco will present the topic “Walking in faith: With whom do we walk?” on Monday, March 28.


Assistant Provost Dr. Andrew Prall will moderate the discussion with Father Aurelio Arenson, who will also co- chair the mission with Father Enco. For more information contact St. Vincent de Paul Parish at (260) 489-3537 or visit www.svdpnt.org.
BISHOP RHOADES VISITS ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH

At a pastoral visit at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Pierceton on Sunday, March 13, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades chatted with diocesan seminarians, who were returning to college for seminary studies in Minnesota, and parishioners at a luncheon that followed the Mass.

BISHOP RHOADES SERVES AS WAITER

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades assisted with a Christ Child Society of Fort Wayne fundraiser, Celebrity Wait Night, on Tuesday, March 8, at the Philmore on Broadway. Bishop Rhoades encouraged the guests to “feast tonight, and then turn to fasting, prayer and almsgiving to start Lent the next day.” He then led the prayer before the meal. Sherri Miller of the Christ Child Society reported an estimated $25,000 was raised for the organization. “It was a huge success. We couldn’t be happier with the turnout and the generosity of those who attended,” Miller told Today’s Catholic. Above, Bishop Rhoades shakes hands with Dr. David Pollinfrone, seated with his wife, Lynne, and Margaret Nolan.

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**Stations of the Cross bring reflection to school children on Christ’s Passion**

**BY LISA KOCZANOWSKI**

D uring the lenten season, Catholics of all ages will be spending the 40 days reflecting on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. One of the ways that communities relive the path of the Lord to His final hours on earth is through the Stations of the Cross. Schools throughout the diocese will not only keep their academic curriculum lessons going but have also planned ways to introduce the path of Jesus to their grade school students.

“St. Anthony students (in South Bend) will be working on being present to the Lord on His journey to the cross. This Lenten season we hope to have more frequent encounters with the Stations of the Cross with weekly prayer services dedicated to The Way,” said St. Anthony Principal Chad Barwick. This will happen in large groups, with homeroom teams through fourth and fifth-grade Stations of the Cross.

“We will also encourage teachers to take their classes into the sanctuary to lead them through in a more intimate setting. We are blessed that Father Mark Gurtner will lead us through stations many times throughout Lent. His leadership, along with our veteran faculty, has really created a spirit of reverence and excitement about Stations of the Cross among our students,” Barwick said. They will also have the sixth-grade class present a living Stations of the Cross to the parish and school communities. Teachers Tracy Taehran and Sister Mary Viameny have been working to prepare students for their lines and roles, as well as costumes, props and sets.

“The students’ preparation helps them to have a deeper appreciation for the rich tradition of Stations, and, more importantly, the journey Christ took to the cross,” said Barwick.

St. Jude Grade School will observe the “Way of the Cross” on Fridays in Lent that the school is in session.

“We also do an annual Holy Thursday luncheon, which is a series of prayers relating the Jewish seder tradition to the Last Supper. It is not a seder meal in and of itself, but uses many of the same prayers, mixed with Scripture readings, designed to help students make the connection between the Passover and the Last Supper. We conclude with a full lunch for teachers and students and the sharing of ‘lamb cakes,’ as a foretaste of Easter celebration,” said Stephen Domdellinger, principal of St. Jude Grade School.

Christopher Kolakovich, the principal of St. Thomas the Apostle School in Elkhart, said the entire student body will participate in Stations of the Cross on three different Fridays during Lent.

“Almost every day students are given a prayer card with appropriate responses so that they can follow along. Music is incorporated as we sing ‘Were you There? ’ throughout the service. The third Station of the Cross is very special because it is a ‘Living Station.’ Our eighth graders, in full costume and attire, act out the 14 stations for our students and then pray for parishioners in the evening,” said Kolakovich. “It is a powerful experience not only to pray the stations, but to see them happening at the same time. The stations offer a valuable time for prayer and reflection. They serve as a reminder of all that Christ went through for us.”

According to Maggie Mackowiak, the principal at Corpus Christi School in South Bend, during Lent, the Catholic Identity Committee plans activities that the school does every day during Lent. They participate in things like school-wide prayer services, morning readings over the intercom system, and each individual classroom does age-appropriate activities.

“The Stations of the Cross are prayed once per week by grade levels. Father Daryl Rybicki leads them using age-appropriate books. Grades one through five go together and then six through eight. It is important that the children understand what they are reading and praying while in church for the Stations of the Cross. Our parish also has evening Stations of the Cross and I believe our students, having prayed them with their classes during the day, attend with their families in the evenings,” said Mackowiak.

The goal is to give students the opportunity to reflect on the suffering and passion of Jesus in the way that is most meaningful for them. I talk to the teachers about making sure that they prepare the Stations of the Cross. Students should come into the church knowing what the Stations are and how they tell the story of the Passion. I do hope that our older students take the time to reflect on the prayers and media tions, which can often be deep and very meaningful,” Domdellinger said.

“It is also important to remember that the Stations of the Cross originated primarily as a visual experience, so I also tell the teachers, especially in the younger grades, that it is okay to teach kids to follow the stations visually and to use the depictions in their booklets as a point of meditation. It’s not all about the words. We usually sing a very simple opening and closing hymn or verses of the ‘Stabat Mater,’ so there is also a way for those who are musically inclined to learn from that as well,” added Domdellinger.

Schools try to keep things age appropriate with their various activities and help the child understand the journey of Jesus in a way they can relate.

“Our goal is to help them understand how we pray them, leading to why we pray them, and ultimately guiding them to see the importance of praying the Stations of the Cross. Children today need images of hope, the journey of Jesus and his ultimate Resurrection, can be the beginning of the message of hope,” said Mackowiak.

Helping children understand the values of prayer and reflection are a major goal of enhancing the spiritual journey of students for educators.

“Students need to understand that Lent, like Advent, is a different time of year. Building in different prayer experiences and devotions helps remind the students that we are not just in ordinary time,” said Domdellinger.

“Ultimately, we hope the time our students spend walking with Jesus during Stations of the Cross will bring them closer to the Lord. Like all prayerful experiences, we hope it becomes habit and that our students encourage their families to attend both Stations of the Cross and Mass at St. Anthony School. We’ve been blessed by this renewed sense of families exploring their faith together among our school families,” said Barwick.

Members of St. Mary’s Parish and the Fort Wayne community began their Lenten journey with a simple soup lunch in the St. Mary’s Oechtering Hall following the Ash Wednesday service held in the church on March 9. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, center, joined St. Mary’s pastoral associate Tony Henry, right at the table, and others for soup following Bishop Rhoades’ blessing. The meal was sponsored by St. Mary Parish and donations benefited the St. Mary’s Soup Kitchen. Members of the Bishop Luers Key Club served the meal.
Polish artist’s devotional legacy lives on

BY KAREN CLIFFORD

NEW CARLISLE — Former St. Adalbert parishioner Stefan Kruk, who died in July of 1993, was a man who in 1949 came to the United States in search of freedom and the promise of a better life. Those who knew him spoke of his love of his native Poland, of being a WW II German labor camp survivor, auto mechanic and good friend. But it was his devotion to Our Lady of Czestochowa, also called the Black Madonna, that brought him attention as a prominent local artist throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Halina and Julian Włochowski, parishioners of Holy Family Parish, recently spoke to Today’s Catholic about the impact Kruk and his wife Janina had on their lives, and how Kruk’s oil painting reproductions of Our Lady of Czestochowa still generate interest and inspiration in several of the area’s Catholic churches.

It was during WW II while the Kruks lived in Krakow, Poland, that Janina was captured by the Germans and sent to a labor camp. When Stefan returned home and found that his wife was missing, he began searching and learned that she had been taken. He then volunteered to work at the camp so that they could be together. Halina recounted.

Julian recalled it was while at the camp that Kruk, who kept a picture of Our Lady of Czestochowa in his pocket, made a vow that he would paint her portrait and give it to a church if he were ever freed.

Kruk was able to keep this promise by painting several reproductions of Our Lady of Czestochowa while he resided in South Bend.

There are many legends surrounding the original painting. One legend holds that the picture of the Madonna was painted by St. Luke the Evangelist.

Another legend says that during the 4th century the portrait was transported to Constantinople by St. Helena where it remained for five centuries. Around the 9th century the picture was said to be displayed at a castle in Belz, which was north of Red Ruthenia, Poland.

August 26, 1382 is the date that Polish history marks as the arrival of the painting to the city of Czestochowa, where the painting and shrine to Our Lady of Czestochowa still stands.

Kruk duplicated a scar on the neck, and two slash marks on the cheek of Our Lady of Czestochowa’s original painting in his reproductions. The scar on the neck is attributed to an arrow, shot by Tartars in Belz and the slash marks from bandits in the 14th century. He also replicated the dark pigmentation seen on the original and hence called it the Black Madonna.

One of the largest reproductions that Kruk painted of Our Lady of Czestochowa measures nine feet and was given to St. Adalbert Parish on the 600th anniversary of the original painting’s arrival in Czestochowa. Julian, who helped build the frame for this reproduction, noted that the painting was done in two pieces because of its weight and size.

In addition to his paintings, the Włochowskis fondly remember Kruk’s friendship and generosity.

“When we moved from Poland we didn’t know any English. Stefan, who was an auto mechanic in South Bend was able to secure a job for Julian at the same body shop,” said Halina.

“We were able to pay them back a little at a time. They were such good people,” remarked Halina.

Julian added that Kruk never accepted money for his paintings, but rather saw them as gifts and believed that every Polish house should have a picture of Our Lady of Czestochowa. The Włochowskis have one of Kruk’s reproductions of Our Lady in their home along with several other paintings by the artist.

In addition to the nine-foot oil reproduction of Our Lady of Czestochowa that is periodically rotated with other oil paintings at St. Adalbert Parish, smaller Kruk reproductions of Our Lady hang in St. Stanislaus Kostka in New Carlisle, St. Pius X in Granger, and St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr in South Bend. Another reproduction, thought to be by Kruk, is on display at Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw.
Mel Tardy ready to ‘do something for Christ’

SOUTH BEND — The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches “it is the task of deacons to assist the bishop and priests in the celebration of the divine mysteries, above all the Eucharist, in the distribution of Holy Communion, in assisting at and blessing marriages, in the proclamation of the Gospel and preaching, in presiding over funerals, and in dedicating themselves to the various ministries of charity.” — No. 1570.

The sacred Gospel of St. Mark tells the events of Christ’s rising from the dead on the first day of the week, his appearance to Mary Magdalene at the tomb and to the two disciples walking on their way to the country. Christ Himself appears to the frightened Eleven at table, rebukes them for their hardness of heart and disbelief and then commands them to “Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.” — Mk 16:15.

The deacon at ordination receives the unique privilege to proclaim the Gospel during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. St. Mark’s Gospel gives to his chosen disciples, a specific authority and responsibility to proclaim their belief in Christ to all people, both in and out of the pew. The Gospel of salvation, peace, hope, joy and love must be heard by all. The permanent deacon shares this responsibility under the direction of the bishop and priests.

The call to evangelize all peoples through faith in Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church is a responsibility taken seriously by deacon candidate Mel Tardy and his wife Annie. As parishioners of St. Augustine, South Bend, they share a particular passion to bring the message of the Gospel to the African American community.

Mel has felt the call to “do something for Christ” since he was a young boy living in New Orleans. His mother and father, both opera singers, taught Mel the value of the arts. In 1986, Mel received a bachelor of arts degree in studio art from the University of Notre Dame. To further his education he completed a masters in business administration there in 1990. For several years, Mel worked in undergraduate admissions at the university. For the last 14 years, he has been an academic advisor for first-year studies at Notre Dame. He is a faculty advisor for the Notre Dame Gospel Choir and assists with liturgical music for the Rejoice Masses held on campus. Mel’s desire to spread the Gospel and his musical talents provide an avenue for ministry beyond the Notre Dame Campus.

In his parish home of St. Augustine, Mel also directs the Gospel Choir and serves on the religious experience/liturgy committee. He is active in youth ministry and serves on the parish pastoral council. He assists with teaching RCIA, marriage preparation, lecturing and is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. Feeling privileged to be African American Catholics, Mel and Annie share a passion to be witnesses of their faith to other members of the African American community, both on campus and in their parish. They are members of the Tolton Society, which is a Catholic social justice outreach ministry.

Augustine John Tolton, born a slave, was ordained to the priesthood in 1886 in Rome. Assigned to the United States, specifically Quincy, Ill., and Chicago, Father Tolton worked tirelessly to evangelize and minister to Black Catholics. The Tardy’s enthusiasm for evangelization is a welcomed response to Christ’s command to “proclaim the Gospel to every creature.”

ST. JOSEPH-ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON SCHOOL SHOW CHOIR COMPETES AT TWO LOCAL COMPETITIONS

The St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth School show choir, the Brooklyn Street Singers, performed March 4 at the Bishop Luers Midwest Show Choir Invitational and on March 5, shown here at the Homestead High School Classic Showcase. The Brooklyn Street Singers, made up of 14 fifth and seventh graders, is directed by Ben Wedler and the choreography is by Ryan Dawson.

A GLIMPSE: THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

BY GINNY KOHRMAN

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Msgr. Campion reports on social communications of America to council

HUNTINGTON — Msgr. Owen Campion, associate publisher of Our Sunday Visitor and papal-appointed member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, was in Rome on March 2 to present a report on Church communications in the United States.

Msgr. Campion is one of 53 members appointed to serve on the council for a five year term. He was appointed in 2006. The early March meeting was opened by Pope Benedict XVI. In the days that followed speakers, including Msgr. Campion, were assigned to provide continental reports and suggestions for action.

Msgr. Campion said, “Regarding social communications, the United States, the coming of the digital media in all its forms has profoundly changed the habits of people as they seek information and engage in dialogue. It especially is true of youth.”

“Within this picture,” Msgr. Campion said, “American Catholics, and actually all Americans, now form their opinions of the Catholic Church through the social media or from reports and commentaries in the secular media and from popular entertainment.”

He spoke of the print media with its declining circulation and its uncertain future, “The system of Catholic print media, once so strong, is not so good,” he said. “It is not effectively coordinated. Even if acknowledged, it is not utilized or encouraged enough as an option for the Church.”

Msgr. Campion said, “In the United States, the time is ripe for the new evangelization foreseen by the Holy Father, precisely with its component of total personal conversion to Jesus.”

He said that the American Catholic communicators and Church leaders “do not need funding from the outside or extended advice in the strictly technical details of communications,” but advised on several issues the Pontifical Council may address.

The first, he said, is “the Church in the United States needs more strongly to embrace evangelization by realizing fully that more and more Americans consider institutional religion as irrelevant at best, and a parasite at worst. The Church in general must confront religious individualism and indifferentism with the Catholic sense of ecclesiology, that the Church is a community, branches of the one vine that is Christ, Mystici Corporis. Church leadership must look beyond the near and the familiar, beyond practicing Catholics, to inactive Catholics and indeed to the society.”

Second, he said, “Catholic leaders need more directly to hear about, and enter, the digital revolution, and they must consider what may come, even if no one wisely can predict every aspect of the future in this regard.”

The third, he said, is “communications efforts in the United States must engage, compensate, and respect competent and well-formed personnel, recognizing social communications is a quite competitive industry in so many cases is good, but in other aspects it is not so good,” he said. “It is not effectively coordinated. Even if acknowledged, it is not utilized or encouraged enough as an option for the Church.”

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The third, he said, is “communications efforts in the United States must engage, compensate, and respect competent and well-formed personnel, recognizing social communications is a quite competitive industry in so many aspects.”

And fourth, while the future is unknown, “the Church in America needs careful planning in preparing a comprehensive strategy in communications, to which local dioceses and religious voices may look for guidance, and in which they may be involved.”

Fifth, Msgr. Campion said, “since so many Catholics learn about the Church from commercial news providers, local Church leaders should summon secular journalists to the historic high ideals of American journalism, obviously understanding and acknowledging these ideals themselves.

Absolutely, the Church must be forthright and timely in facing its own problems in the public discussion.

“Lastly, and critically,” Msgr. Campion advised, “so many Americans search for meaning and peace in their lives, a quest that we Catholics believe is satisfied in the personal discovery of God. Nothing so intrigues human beings as other humans. We have our wonderful stories of faith and witness to tell. As to Catholic communicators themselves, the Church must reinforce them in their own discipleship, a discipleship that must be evangelistic and also genuinely ecclesial.”
Reflection books enhance Lenten journey

BY KAY COZAD

A s Lent unfolds, a desire to enhance the journey of prayer and sacrifice can be assisted by following Lenten reflections. Today’s Catholic offers these suggestions to supplement your Lenten observance.

“The Little Way of Lent: Meditations in the Spirit of St. Therese of Lisieux,” by Father Gary Caster offers a new way to look at our Lenten sacrifices through the simplicity of St. Therese. Each chapter begins with a pertinent quote from the saint’s writings and each meditation closes with a shorter quote to aid in reflection. The daily meditations are based on the common thread woven throughout the book — developing a personal friendship with Jesus Christ. ISBN: 978-1-45652-358-9

“Something to Think About ... For Lent,” by Mary Penich is a daily reflection book that will take you from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday with Scripture verses straight from the Lectionary readings for Lent — Cycle A, and personal reflections from the life of the author. Each reflection concludes with a prayer focusing on the common thread woven throughout the book — developing a personal friendship with Jesus Christ. ISBN: 978-1-45652-358-9


Jelena Vardij Valancius is one of the two Medjugorje seers. In late 1982, at the age of 16, she began to see Our Lady and hear her voice in an intimate way that she describes as “an intense presence of Mary, an acquaintance of the heart.” It was during the Blessed Mother with “the eyes of the heart,” Jelena is married and lives in Rome with her husband Massimiliano and their four children.

Sister Margarett Mary Mitchell is a graduate of Yeshiva University with a degree in industrial engineering. Following graduation she lived in Winter Park, Florida, eight years and was absorbed in what some describe as the “sheikah” culture. A pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi in 2000 changed her life and a year later, she entered the Order of the Sisters of St Francis of Perpetual Admiration. In 2009 she became a perpetually professed Sister.

Al Barbarino is an internationally known singer and Catholic lay evangelist. His music has touched thousands and the proceeds from the sale of his two albums have fed children and adults around the world. He is a Lay Franciscan of the Franciscan Missionaries in South Bronx, New York. Al has made numerous trips to Medjugorje.

Danielle Duse is a sophomore at the University of Tampa and her younger sister, Alena, is a junior at the Academy of Holy Names in Tampa, Florida. Last May, their family went to Medjugorje for the youth festival. They stayed at the home of Ivan Dragicevic and were with him each evening when he had apparition. Their family pilgrimage is a testament of faith in how God provides even when hardship is about to overcome us.

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By Kay Cozad

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SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Fr. Stan Fortuna, C.F.R., is internationally known for his retreats as well as his powerful preaching. He has performed at World Youth Days in Sydney and Toronto and is a very popular speaker at conferences and retreats. He has recorded twenty DVDs and CDs and appeared numerous times on EWTN. Fr. Stan is a member of the Community of Franciscan Fathers of the Renewal.

Dr. Rosalee Turrent is the founder of the 101 Foundation. After a successful teaching career in upstate New York, she has devoted her time to operating the messages of Our Lady through her national newsletter, “The 101 Piece.” In 1972 she organized the first World Peace Flight with 347 planes carrying 347 pilgrims to help places around the world. Today Catholic cataloged her as one of the top 100 holiest Catholic of the century.

Fr. Mark Bollard worked in his family’s business for a number of years after obtaining a master’s degree in business. He began to consider a vocation to the priesthood following a trip to Medjugorje in 1994. After four years of discernment, he entered the seminary and was ordained to the priesthood on May 31, 2008. Presently he serves as parochial assistant for three parishes in the Baton Rouge, Louisiana area.

Fr. Daryk Redlinski has played a major role in the Medjugorje Conference at Notre Dame for over twenty years as a speaker, retreat leader, and leader of the Eucharistic procession to the Grotto, and provides the Holy Hour and the Living Rosary. Fr. Daryk has been to Medjugorje nine times and is indesatellite in his work for the Holy Hour to Our Lady. He is a past president of Copus Church Fund in South Bend, Indiana and a member of the Queen of Peace Ministry Board of Directors.

Conference Schedule

Friday, May 13
5:00 pm: Door open
7:00 pm: Conference begins
GUEST SPEAKER
Candlelight rosary procession to the Limaun Grotto

Saturday, May 14
7:15 am: Doors open
8:00 am: Morning session
Holy Mass
Proceedion and Consecration
GUEST SPEAKER (all sessions)
10:30 am: Afternoon session
6:30 pm: Evening session
Eucharist Adoration and Benediction

Sunday, May 15
7:15 am: Doors open
8:30 am: Morning session
GUEST SPEAKER
10:00 am: Holy Mass
2:30 pm: Conference ends

Sponsored by Queen of Peace Ministries, Box 761, Notre Dame, IN 46556
Phone: (574) 288-8777

Web site: www.QueenofPeaceMinistries.com

e-mail: maryconference@sbcglobal.net

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Jesus is God, active and present

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN E. CAMPION

2nd Sunday in Lent
Mt 17:1-9

The Book of Genesis is the source of this weekend’s first biblical reading. As its name implies, Genesis reveals the divine origin of life, and it also reveals the divine plan in the forming of the Hebrew race.

Genesis is a splendidly vivid revelation of God’s majesty and power, and indeed the divinity of humanity. It is a great pity that this marvelous book has been so tormented and misconstrued by well-meaning but uninformed readers over the years. In their earnest attempt to preserve the divine character of this book, they lose much of its impact.

This weekend’s reading is about Abraham. Considered by scholars to have been an actual person and not a myth, Abraham is regarded as the father of the Jewish people.

The reading makes several points. God is active in human affairs, and that humans can communicate with God. God has a very strong faith. God rewards this faith by pleading that Abraham’s descendants, until the end of time, will be God’s special people. It is not a dignity conferred with obligation. The people who descend from Abraham must be loyal to God and by their lives of faith reveal God to the world.

For its second reading, this weekend’s liturgy presents a passage from the Second Epistle to Timothy.

Timothy was a disciple of Paul and was venerated by the Church as a great saint, important in the formation of our faith. According to the New Testament, Timothy was the son of a pagan father and a devout Jewish mother. He was Paul’s secretary at one point. He once was imprisoned with Paul but was released. Tradition is that Timothy was the first bishop of Ephesus.

In this reading, the epistle encourages us to be strong in his Christian belief despite the difficulties and obstacles that will arise.

St. Matthew’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is the story of the Transfiguration, replete with symbols of God and images of God with which any Jew instantly would have been familiar, as these symbols and images appear throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

Brilliant light, mountaintops, and pure white symbolized God. Finally, surrounding Jesus were Moses and Elijah, the great heroes of the religious tradition.

This scene utterly contrasts with that of Calvary. Instead of shimmering clothes, Jesus on the cross has been stripped of his garments. Instead of glowing clouds and brilliant light, gloom and darkness surround the cross.

Reflection

Lent is little more than one week in progress, and already the Church is encouraging us and reinforcing our faith as Jesus strengthened the faith of the Apostles who stood trembling and in dismay before the divine sight manifested upon the mountain.

The message is clear. Jesus is God, active and present among us. However, personally to be saved, we must believe, and in this belief we must commit our very lives to Christ. So, Abraham is critically a part of this weekend’s reading.

Nowhere in these readings is there any account of the crucifixion. Nevertheless, the event of the Lord’s death on the cross is essential to understanding fully this weekend’s message.

Calvary represents the world. It was for a moment, seemingly, the triumph of earthly power and human sin over good. At least surely this is how it was interpreted by the enemies of Jesus. Of course, Jesus reversed all this by rising in glory.

Every human being can be tricked into assuming that earthly things, or earthly satisfaction, will bring them to triumph. They will not. Sinning brings death. All around it is gloom and darkness.

But, we must have faith, to see beyond the gloom to the light of Jesus. As seen in the Transfiguration.

READINGS

Sunday: Gn 12:1-4 Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22-23; Mt 17:1-9
Monday: Dn 9:4b-10 Ps 79:8-9, 11, 13 Lk 6:36-38
Tuesday: Is 1:10, 16-20 Ps 50:9, 10b, 17-23, 25-29; Lk 16:19-31
Wednesday: Jr 18:18-20 Ps 31:4-6, 14-16 Mt 20:17-28
Thursday: 17:5-10 Ps 1:1-6 Lk 16:31-34
Friday: Ps 7:10-14, 8:10 Ps 40:7-11 Heb 10:4-10 Lk 12:36-38

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HOPE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

fared if I went back to work so soon after losing their father? There were so many questions that only I would be able to discern over time.

As I processed those questions, I came to realize that Trent’s death had changed me and how I saw the world. Nothing, I learned, would ever be the same. My priorities and my sense of the overarching importance of life truly are fragile and fleeting took shape. Things that once seemed so important before his death held no interest for me now or were no longer relevant.

As time progressed and I made my way through the mourning process I began to realize that I wanted to spend my time doing meaningful activities. So, armed with only my faith and the deep abiding love I still held protective-ly in my heart for the man who had gone before me, I set out to determine my purpose.

As I ventured out into the world again, I discovered where once I found pleasure in personal achievements and acquiring things, now I looked to deepen my relationships with family and friends. I felt a need to serve — my family, church and community. It didn’t happen over night, but on the painstaking journey I walked, a heightened sense of compassion for others naturally evolved and I began to feel a calling to work with the bereaved.

Many of us, after a loss, seek an entirely new life purpose, others a renewal of the passion we held before the death. I know a gentleman who left a high-flying corporate position to direct a non-profit children’s organization following the sudden death of his father. Another young widow found new passion in presenting educational workshops in her field of nursing. A retired widow found fulfillment in volunteering not only an area her heart, but also working with flowers, a lifelong passion, at a neighborhood florist.

Life holds so many questions — and opportunities. As we seek new meaning for our lives after loss, over time hope and healing will open our broken hearts to yet unexplored ventures of purpose and love. We can find fulfillment and new life — and not our loved ones be proud!

Kay Cozad is a certified grief educator and news editor of Today’s Catholic News. She is the author of “Prayer Book for Widows.” She can be reached at kcozad@todayscatholicnews.org.

CHRISTOPHER STEFANICK

would take him nowhere. It depicts his painful desire for a normal life. It shows him sick as a dog for days on crowded tour bus. There’s even a scene where his vocal coach offers him an out if he wants to stop sacrificing so much. He chooses to press on, knowing that ongoing success and ongoing sacrifice will continue to go hand in hand.

The most powerful message from the movie comes from Justin’s parents, Jackie and Pop. They say, “I want Justin to be able to find his identity and worth, not from what he can do, but from who he is.”

Preteens are often so desperate to figure out identity and worth, not from what they can do, but from who they are that ongoing success and ongoing sacrifice will continue to go hand in hand.

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Preteens are often so desperate to figure out identity and worth, not from what they can do, but from who they are — though that’s a cultural tragedy for another article. But whatever the reason, preteens are obsessed. His video for “Baby” is the most viewed YouTube clip of all time, with 471,280,334 hits as of today.

It’s steadily climbing toward a billion.

The next reason, preteens are obsessed, is that ongoing success and ongoing sacrifice will continue to go hand in hand.

The most powerful message from the movie comes from Justin’s parents, Jackie and Pop. They say, “I want Justin to be able to find his identity and worth, not from what he can do, but from who he is.”

Preteens are often so desperate to figure out identity and worth, not from what they can do, but from who they are. They love or hate him for another article. But whatever

“I want Justin to be able to find his identity and worth, not from what he can do, but from who he is.”

PATHE MAKER, JUSTIN’S MOM

S C R I P T U R E  S E A R C H

Gospel for March 20, 2011
Matthew 17:1-9

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Second Sunday of Lent, Cycle A: The Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

PETER
MOUNTAIN
THE SUN
ELIJAH
SPEAKING
BELIEVED
AFRAID

CHRISTOPHER STEFANICK

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SPORTS
CYO Panthers learn skills for a lifetime

BY MICHÉLLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — Coach John Reimbold directed his St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth Lady Panthers to a 10-8 record, a second place seventh-grade league finish and a 2011 tournament runner-up spot, but more importantly, he hoped to teach them skills off the court that will carry over for a lifetime.

With three new players added to a small roster of eight returning players, the team experienced a welcome challenge. “Making sure everyone works well together on the court is important to the team, but off the court is more important. Welcoming and feeling welcomed, is key to developing these positive contributing members of their community,” says Reimbold.

“Good sportsmanship fundamentals carry over off the court,” the leader added.

The results were very positive for Reimbold and his partners on the bench. “Assistant coaches Craig Baker, Gary Torkeo and I couldn’t be prouder of our season record,” relates Reimbold.

Team standouts this season included Grace Everett who topped both the points and rebounds per game categories with 5.41 and 7 respectively. Madeline Reimbold who averaged 4.83 points per game and 3.89 steals per game, as well as Abbie Grace Lee who was second in steals per game and newcomer Katie Prendergast who took second place in the rebounds per game category.

“We worked hard this season on shooting form, fundamental ball handling skills and solid defense strategies and are proud of the strides we made as a team” details Reimbold. “Perhaps the greatest stride made during the season was inspiring the players to see where fundamental hard work can take you.”

This season, in addition to focusing on the fundamentals of shooting, rebounding, ball handling and sound defense, St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth was able to see how hard work and dedication can pay off firsthand. Thanks to Ball State’s women’s basketball assistant coach Kelsey Corbin, the Panther team was privileged to experience basket ball at the division one level up close and personal with a team road trip to Muncie. The team toured the athletic facilities, locker room and arena. The Panthers were guests at a home game and gained information about the hoops program, athletes, conditioning and scholarship opportunities. As a youngster, Corbin was allowed a similar experience and was happy to make the impression on the Panthers with hopes they too, would be able to pass it on some day.

The St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth seventh-grade girls’ team enjoy a road trip to Ball State University. In the photo, are the following, front row from left, Madison Busch, Abbie Grace Lee, Madeline Reimbold and Lydia Brown; back row from left: Ball State Coach Kelsey Corbin, Claire Roberts, Grace Everett, Kaitlin Emmett, Madeline Ritter and Katie Prendergast.

ICCL Pumas finish season with a flourish

BY CHUCK FREEBY

ELKHART — Early in the season, Queen of Peace girls’ basketball team tended to go into a zone when they would see a zone. Now the Pumas have found their comfort zone, and finished the regular season with a flourish.

Coach Jeff Jozwiak’s squad picked up a weekend sweep to close the Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) campaign, downing St. Anthony Friday night, 31-17, before notching an 18-11 win over Holy Cross at St. Thomas School Sunday afternoon.

“The girls are starting to learn the game and see things better when we face a zone defense,” notes Jozwiak. “Zone offense was a struggle early. We were a little mechanical. But every practice they come ready to learn. They’re hard workers and very attentive.”

The lessons learned paid dividends over the weekend. Friday night’s victory featured 13 points from Sydney Burkart, who was a perfect 6-0-6 from the field, thanks to some crisp passing. Mary Jozwiak had four assists on offense to complement her five steals on defense.

Sunday, Queen of Peace won a physical battle with Holy Cross, led by Sarah Hanson’s 10 points. That marked the sixth straight win for the improving Pumas.

While an 8-3 record at the varsity level may be something assistant Coach Joe Oliva, “We played in the championship game in sixth grade, so this is not unexpected for us. We’ve had some attrition from that team, but still have six core girls plus Hannah Dover, a seventh grader, and we’re starting to play up to our potential.”

It’s a good time to do it with the ICCL tournament beginning next weekend. St. Joseph, Mishawaka, won the Martin DePorres division regular-season title, and opens with St. Jude Saturday at St. Thomas gym. St. Joseph, South Bend, ran through a perfect regular season to capture the John Bosco Division. The Eagles play the winner of Friday’s tournament opener between St. Anthony and St. Joseph (Colors) at St. Pius X gym.

Also on the final weekend, St. Matthew and Corpus Christi each posted sweeps. Full pairings and weekend scores can be found online in the girls basketball section at www.icclsports.org.

UNIVERSITY OF SAINT FRANCIS BASKETBALL TEAM MEMBERS SELECTED FOR NAIA DAKTRONIKS SCHOLAR-ATHLETE TEAM

The University of Saint Francis has had a total of three members of its 2010-11 basketball teams earn NAIA Daktroniks Scholar-Athlete selection. USF senior Vini Dawson was the lone selection from the USF women’s basketball team. This is Dawson’s second selection. She was a 2008-09 selection as a junior. She red-shirted in 2009-10. On the men’s side, USF juniors Kevin Dawson and Isaac Campbell were selected. To qualify a student-athlete must have a 3.2 cumulative GPA or higher, must be a junior or senior and have made a contribution to the team.
FORT WAYNE — Football In Training (FIT) is gearing up to kick off their second season with registration for the 2011 fall season set to begin mid-April. Inspired by a photo of the Indianapolis Cathedral football state champs at a friend’s home, a group of Bishop Dwenger High School alums brought the idea back to Fort Wayne in 2009 and successfully launched the inaugural season in 2010. The article about the team noted that the core of the winning unit had played together since the third grade.

The goal of the parents birthing the FIT program: to provide their young sons the opportunity to learn and play the game of tackle football. While not, in any way, associated with the Catholic school system, the program is open to third- and fourth-grade boys from those Fort Wayne schools making FIT the perfect stepping stone to Catholic Youth League (CYO) football action. FIT is developmental in nature and teaches players the fundamentals of the game in a safe, fun and competitive environment.

In their opening season, the FIT program melded six teams with multiple groups from both St. Charles and St. Vincent along with a team from St. John the Baptist, New Haven, and St. Jude. For 2011, the league will add a combined team from St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, and St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, which is similar to the CYO team alignments.

Jen Pesa, fundraising and outreach director is quick to add, “All players from any of the Fort Wayne and surrounding area schools, regardless of school size, are eligible even if your school is not big enough to form its own team. We will place your son on a team near your school.”

The FIT season consists of eight weeks of games typically played at Shoaff Park. Practices are limited to two times per week. The program has partnered with the University of Saint Francis enabling the championship games to be played on the school’s turf.

Pesa, a 1990 graduate of Bishop Dwenger High School, and her husband, Paul (1988), were among those responsible for raising nearly $25,000 to fund the nonprofit program.

Pesa marvels, “We had very generous donors which made this all possible for nearly 100 youngsters.”

Other volunteer board members include: Brandon Downey (’94), Nick Groves (’91), Steve Henry (’89), Brian Finley (’89), Steve Smeltzley (’88) and Todd Ellinger.

Greg Eifert, whose son Griffin participated last year as a third grader, was very impressed with the program coining it “awesome.”

“FIT is a great avenue for young players to learn the fundamentals,” Eifert says. “The coordinators have put together a solid core of great coaches who have played both at the high school and college levels.”

With the addition of two more teams for the upcoming season, FIT has also joined forces with the Fabini Foundation for fundraising collaboration. Their donation matching program will be key to assisting with the extra equipment and uniforms needed. The group’s sponsors listed on the website have been of tremendous financial support to get the program off the ground and will continue to play a vital role as the program continues to grow.

Those interested in becoming a sponsor of this program or interested in registering their child online should visit www.footballtraining.com after April 15.

FIT helps young children learn football

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN


More than 100 people braved cold, wet winter weather and icy streets to have copies of their books signed by the cardinal, who co-wrote “The Mass” with Mike Aquilina.

“The year for being interested in the book, but more importantly, thank you for being interested in the subject of the book,” Cardinal Wuerl said.

He arrived to a round of applause from the three dozen people who started waiting in line about a half hour before the book signing was scheduled to begin.

“The Mass, The Glory, The Mystery, The Tradition,” explains every facet of the liturgy. The authors say they wrote the book because while the Mass “is ever ancient and ever new, … it’s time for us to take a fresh look, from where we sit now, and from where we stand and kneel.”

Beth Garcia, a mother of three and a parishioner at Our Lady of Victory Church in Washington, said she wanted to have a copy of the book because “we’re raising our kids in the faith, and it’s great for my husband and me to have a book like this.”

“Even though the Church is like an onion — there is always another layer to peel away and more to discover,” Garcia said.

“Having Cardinal Wuerl’s leadership guiding us is a great asset, a great help, to us as we pass on the faith to our kids,” Msgr. Walter Rossi, the rector, said.

University of America, waited in line to have his book signed because “I just love the way Cardinal Wuerl writes.”

“He is a very wise, to-the-point man,” David said. “How he explains things make a lot of sense to me.”

Many of the people who came to see Cardinal Wuerl bought multiple copies of the book. Among them was Mike Hayes, a parishioner at St. Hugh of Grenoble Parish in Greenbelt, Md. He said that he bought six copies to pass on to members of his family.

“It is good to be reminded just how important the Mass is. As he says in the book, ‘This is who we are,’” Hayes said. “We don’t want to be sedate or complacent in the pew. The Mass is something from Jesus until now that we’ve done every day. Through it, we are connected to the eternal.”


MARCH 20, 2011
TODAY’S CATHOLIC 17
The Grace Card’ offers inspirational approach to family healing

By John Mulderig

NEW YORK (CNS) — An inspirational approach to healing family discord and overcoming racial tensions is offered in the uplifting drama “The Grace Card” (Samuel Goldwyn).

While not especially subtle, director David Evans’ warm-hearted, unobjectionable message movie celebrates the transformationative power of Gospel values in a manner sufficiently winning to compensate for some artistic shortcomings.

Haunted by the long-ago death of his toddler son in an auto accident caused by a black drug dealer, Mac McDonald (Michael Joiner) continues to grapple, more than a decade and a half later, with personal and professional issues.

At home, Mac is dysfunctional—both from his loving wife Sara (Joy Moore) and from the deceased lad’s younger brother Blake (Rob Erikson), now an adult teen. On the job, his career is handicapped by his brooding manner and borderline-racist outlook.

So Mac is far from pleased to find himself teamed as a patrol partner with African-American colleague Sam Wright (Michael Higgenbottom). All the more so since Sam — a happily married part-time minister in the Church of the Nazarene — is given to expressing his cheerful good humor by softly singing hymns to himself as the two drive around town.

Though repeatedly rebuffed by his crabby new cohort, Sam persists in his determination to convince Mac that the solution to his problems can be found by turning to the Lord. Sam draws spiritual support from his gracious wife Debra (Dawntoya Thomason) and from his sage grandfather George (Louis Gossett Jr.), himself a veteran clergyman.

“The Grace Card” plays its strongest suit by urging that inter-racial reconciliation, like familial concord, must be based on a foundation of mutual forbearance patterned after God’s forgiving and self-sacrificial love for humanity.

If that Scripture-based lesson is sometimes driven home with a slightly heavy hand, and helped along by the occasional plot contrivance, it is nonetheless one that viewers of faith will welcome. As for the story through which it’s conveyed, although some thematic elements make it unsuitable for the youngest, parents can bring tweens and teens without worry.

The film contains a drug-use theme and brief action violence with some blood. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II (mature audience): violence and brief action.

“If that Scripture-based lesson is something we need,” Gossett told The Southern Cross, newspaper of the San Diego Diocese, in a phone interview, “The Grace Card” is the story of two police officers — one white, one black — who overcome a strong mutual dislike and ultimately become friends. “Racism is a cancer, and we have to get it out of our systems,” Gossett said.

The message of race reconciliation, like familial reconciliation, is something we need.”

Gossett, seen with costar Michael Higgenbottom, stars in a scene from the movie “The Grace Card.” It is the story of two police officers — one white, one black — who overcome a strong mutual dislike and ultimately become friends. “Racism is a cancer, and we have to get it out of our systems,” Gossett told The Southern Cross, newspaper of the San Diego Diocese, in a phone interview.
WHAT’S HAPPENING?

WHAT’S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send in your announcement at least two weeks prior to the event. Mail to: Today’s Catholic, PO. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or e-mail: fhogan@fw.diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

Fish fry
Fort Wayne — St. John the Baptist Parish, 4500 Fairfield Ave., will have a fish fry Friday, March 18, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. in the Pursley Activity Center. Adults $8, children 6-12 years old $5, 1-5 years old $1. Drive-through and carry-out available.

Fish fry
Yoder — St. Aloysius Parish, 14623 Bluffton Rd., will have a fish fry Friday, March 18, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. Tickets are $8 for adults, $5 for children 6-10 and free for children under 5. Carry-out available.

Fish fry
Roanoke — St. Joseph Parish, 811 Tyler St., will have a fish fry Friday, March 18, from 4-7 p.m. Tickets are $8 for adults, $4 for children 6-12 and children 6 and under free. Drive-through available.

Fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry on Friday, March 18, from 5-7 p.m. Adults $8, children (5-12) $3, Chicken strips for $8 and shrimp for $8.50 will be available.

Fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521 will have a fish fry Friday, March 18, from 5-7:30 p.m. at the Knights hall, 553 E. Washington St. Tickets are $9 for adults, $4 for children under 12 and children under 5 free.

Fish fry
Walkerton — St. Patrick Parish, 811 Tyler St., will have a fish fry Friday, March 18, from 4-7 p.m. Tickets are $8 for adults, $4 for children 6-12 and children 6 and under free. Drive-through available.

Knights plan fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry on Friday, March 18, from 5-7 p.m. Adults $8, children (5-12) $3, Chicken strips for $8 and shrimp for $8.50 will be available.

Fish fry
Fort Wayne — St. Therese Parish, 819 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry Friday, March 25, from 4:30-7 p.m. Tickets are $8.50 for adults, $4.50 for children 5-12 and children under 5 free.

Scouts plan fish fries
Fort Wayne — The St. Vincent de Paul Scouts will have fish fries on Fridays March 25, April 1, and 15, from 5-8 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Tickets are $8 for adults, $4 for children 11-6.

Daughters of Isabella
South Bend — Daughters of Isabella, Notre Dame Circle 572, will have a Corporate Communion Wednesday, March 23, at 12:10 p.m. at the Faith, Hope and Charity Chapel, with lunch to follow at LaPeep.

Lenten Retreat planned
South Bend — The St. Jude Rosary sodality will offer a Lenten Retreat, “Do Everything for the Glory of God.”’ with Jim Murphy on Saturday, March 26, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Lindenwood Retreat Center in Donaldson. The cost is $25 and includes lunch and snacks. RSVP to (574) 291-0570.

Lenten day of recollection
Fort Wayne — The Last Seven Words of Christ, a day of recollection will be presented by Bob Deck, a secular Franciscan, Saturday, March 19, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the spiritual center of St. Vincent de Paul Parish. A freewill offering will cover materials. Call (260) 490-9571 for information.

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REST IN PEACE

Jeromine W. Plonski, 92, St. Matthew Cathedral
Daniel H. Kois, 79, St. Joseph
Wabash
Eloise Giddens, 95, St. Bernard
Warsaw
Leisa M. Rossi, 47, Sacred Heart
Yoder
Donald C. Gruss, 80, St. Aloysius

Lioa R. Richardson, 88, St. Vincent de Paul
Garrett
Helena Wolpert, St. Joseph
Michalakowa
Cecilia E. Schwob, 85, St. Joseph
New Haven
Katherine E. Ort, 93, St. Louis Besancon
South Bend
Frank J. Dupuy, 89, Holy Cross
Pablo M. Gonzales, 66, St. Adalbert
Dolores M. Brooks, 78, St. Casimir
Brian A. Buda, 37, Holy Family

December Priest Hosts Ireland Pilgrimage

Ireland Pilgrimage
12 Days
Departs August 4, 2011
from $1658*

Escape to the Emerald Isle for cooler summer weather and travel with other Catholics on this Pilgrimage of Southern Ireland. Your chaplain is Father Daniel Cerec, Senior Priest at St. Elizabeth’s Church in Wilmington, DE. He has been a Holland American Line chaplain; moreover, this will be his fifth trip as a YMT Vacations Chaplain. Your adventure begins in Dublin with sightseeing including: Trinity College (housing the Book of Kells and book of Armaugh containing 9th Century gospel manuscripts); Dublin Castle, and the largest church in Ireland, St. Patrick’s Cathedral. Sunday evening enjoy Mass at St. Mary’s Pro-Cathedral, head of Dublin’s Archdiocese, then drive to Athlone, Clonmacnoise and Knock. In Knock celebrate Mass at the Basilica of Apparitions, tour the Shrine, visit the Folk Museum, and after lunch join the public processions, following the Stations of the Cross and Rosary Procession ending at the Basilica. Next, travel to Clogh Patrick, visit the ruins of Murtick Abbey, Kylemore Abbey, Connemara National Park, Gallyay, Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven, the Spanish Arch, Kilronan, Cliffs of Moher, Bunratty Castle, Ring of Kerry, Cork, and the Blarney Castle and stone. We will also have Mass at the Holy Cross Abbey, tour the Waterford Crystal factory, visit Glendalough, and have an evening Mass in Dublin. $39 per person, dbl. occ., includes 10 meals. Airfare is extra.

For information, reservations, itinerary, and letter from your chaplain with his phone number call 7 days a week.

1-800-736-7300
is not about materialism; it is to help one another grow in holiness. "Love is not a feeling, it's a decision we make. Love doesn't always feel good," she pointed out. But a loving couple should mutually work toward their heavenly goal.

Those in attendance were instructed to complete an "evaluate your marriage" form by listing the top three priorities in their lives and how the position of each is reflected on a daily basis. Each was asked to list the problem areas invading their relationship and communicate those to their spouse. Though time was set aside during the conference for couples to discuss those priorities, it was generally agreed that the time was too short.

The Alexanders outlined their own priorities. Put God first, then each other, then your children and finally, your relatives and friends. "Everything we have is due to God's grace," said Greg. "Everything they said was inspirational."

The Alexanders want their presentation to be an "enrichment experience," giving couples practical tools to use in evaluating and strengthening their relationship.

In the afternoon sessions, the Alexanders reminded couples that marriage starts in the home and healing and forgiveness are key in the center of their marriages. "Be obedient to God's call," Julie said.

God needs marriages that are solid and good to evangelize to the world, Julie added. The Alexanders reminded the couples that marriage starts in the home and healing and forgiveness begin at home. The Alexanders encouraged couples to use the spousal-type of examination with their children and also ask for forgiveness of their children.

At a panel discussion closing the conference, the Alexanders offered marriage coaching and teaching couples to put God at the center of their marriages.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades greeted the Diocesan Marriage Conference keynote speakers Greg and Julie Alexander. Bishop Rhoades celebrated the Mass that opened the conference.

"I really enjoyed it from the standpoint that I think it's always good to hear from people who are 'real,' have experienced lows and turned their marriage around."