Governor visits Our Lady of Hungary School

BY ANN CAREY

SOUTH BEND — Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels visited Our Lady of Hungary School in South Bend on Nov. 16 to see firsthand how the new state voucher program is being implemented, his first such visit since the vouchers went into effect this school year.

“Our Lady of Hungary happens to have the most voucher students in the South Bend area, so it seemed like a good choice, and it was,” Daniels told a hallway press conference after visiting five classrooms at the school.

Like many inner-city Catholic schools, Our Lady has been struggling with enrollment numbers, and had only 138 students last year. This year, the enrollment is 204, with 66 of those new students attending with the help of state vouchers.

Daniels said he “had a ball” visiting students and talking with them about their studies and their plans for the future.

He related that Father Kevin Bauman, Our Lady pastor, and Principal Melissa Jay and her staff told him about the difference the voucher program is making in the lives of the children and how grateful the parents are because they believe the vouchers have enabled their children to have a better chance in life.

“That’s what we wanted from this program,” Daniels said.

A reporter asked Daniels about the charge that public schools are “the biggest losers” in the voucher program because they have lost students, and thus funds.

“Losing is not about money for adults. Losing is when kids don’t do well,” Daniels said.

The governor pointed out that per-pupil costs at Our

Bishops discuss threats to religious liberty, marriage and healthcare at annual meeting

Baltimore (CNS) — During their annual three-day fall assembly in Baltimore, the U.S. bishops discussed threats to religious liberty, efforts to support traditional marriage and the need to keep a close eye on health care issues.

They also were updated on the Roman Missal translation and the new U.S. ordinariate to bring former Anglicans into the Catholic Church.

During the Nov. 14-16 meeting, they also voted on several items, ranging from approving the annual budget of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to adding new optional memorials for Blessed John Paul II and Blessed Marianne Cope to the U.S. liturgical calendar.

New Orleans Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond, chairman of the Committee on Divine Worship, gave a brief report Nov. 15 on the adoption of the new Roman Missal, addressing questions related to its implementation this Advent.

When asked if it were possible to still use the old missal translation in certain circumstances such as when eucharistic ministers visit the elderly for Communion services, the archbishop said: “The guidelines say to use the new one. But the pastoral practice should allow for some flexibility.”

In votes cast during the first two days of the meeting, the bishops elected Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle as USCCB secretary-elect and Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, as chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace.

They also approved a $217.4 million budget for 2012 and a 3 percent increase in diocesan assessments for 2013. They also overwhelmingly approved a five-year extension of a resolution calling bishops to adhere to sound financial reporting within their dioceses and OK’d priorities and plans for 2012 for the USCCB with a 219-6 vote.

The bishops overwhelmingly approved a new set of guidelines for how dioceses and parishes will administer national collections. The document is a combination of history, rationale and how-to guide.

On the first day of the gathering, the bishops
Archbishop Michael Blume

As you may have seen in the news, last week (November 18-20), our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, made his second trip as Pope to Africa. He visited the country of Benin. While there, the Holy Father presented an important document, an apostolic exhortation, to the Church in Africa. This exhortation came as a result of the 2009 special Synod of Bishops for Africa. It contains important guidance for the Catholic Church in Africa where the Catholic population has nearly doubled in the past 30 years.

You may know that the Apostolic Nuncio to Benin (and also to Togo), Archbishop Michael Blume, SVD, is a native of our diocese. He was born and raised in South Bend. He grew up in Our Lady of Hungary Parish and attended Our Lady of Hungary School. At age 14, he entered the seminary and was ordained a priest of the Society of the Divine Word, in 1972.

As a priest, Archbishop Blume served as a missionary in Ghana, from 1974 to 1990, followed by service in Rome as secretary general of the Society of the Divine Word and then secretary to the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. He was ordained an archbishop in 2005 when he was appointed apostolic nuncio to Benin and Togo. In this position, Archbishop Blume represents the Holy Father in relations with the Church and the governments in both countries.

Last summer, while visiting home, Archbishop Blume shared with me some of the busy preparations he was making for the Holy Father’s apostolic visit to Benin. We can be proud that one of the native sons of our diocese is serving the Church and the Holy Father in this important ministry. Let us pray for Archbishop Blume and for our brothers and sisters in the Church in Africa.

USCCB

Last week, we had the Plenary Assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore. Both Bishop D’Arcy and I attended the Assembly meetings. As always, it was good to meet with our brother bishops in prayer, reflection, and collaboration for the good of the Church in our country.

As usual, we had a full agenda. As Chair of the USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth, I gave an oral report to the bishops on our efforts to strengthen marriage and family life, one of the five Conference priority goals the past few years.

I reported on the variety of resources we have developed, based on the understanding that protecting and defending marriage as an institution goes hand in hand with strengthening and supporting all those husbands and wives who are trying to live in a relationship that is faithful, fruitful and forever.

I would like to highlight the 2009 Pastoral Letter of the U.S. Bishops entitled Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan. I highly recommend it for your reading. I would also like to highlight two major public awareness and education campaigns in both English and Spanish. They are the “For Your Marriage” campaign and the “Por Tu Matrimonio” campaign. These campaigns make use of a dedicated website, a Facebook page, a monthly e-newsletter, and a series of radio and television public service announcements. I highly recommend the “For Your Marriage” website to all our married couples and to those preparing for marriage. Since it was launched four years ago, this website has attracted over a million visitors with more than six million page views.

Though we dealt with several topics during our Baltimore assembly, the most prominent was that of religious liberty. As bishops, we are deeply concerned about threats to religious liberty across our nation, at the federal level and in various states.

Religious freedom is a basic human right, part of our human dignity. It involves more than being able to worship freely, but also the right to live and express our faith in works of charity, education, and health care. The Catholic Church is the largest non-governmental provider of educational, social, charitable, and health care services in our nation. These services are part of our mission. Increasingly, our freedom to offer these services in accord with our beliefs and values is being threatened. There are many examples on both the state and federal levels. One example: sadly, in several states, diocesan Catholic Charities have had to withdraw from adoption and foster care services because of our fidelity to the Church’s teaching on marriage and family. Another example: the regulations from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that would mandate coverage of sterilization and contraception, including abortifacients, in all private health care plans. There are many other examples. We must oppose the growing threats to religious liberty in our nation and defend the free exercise of our religion as envisioned by our Founding Fathers and enshrined in the First Amendment of our Constitution.

Rome

Finally, I ask for your prayers as I go to Rome this week to make a presentation at the Vatican on health care in North America. I was called to Rome by the Pontifical Council for Health Care to deliver this address at a meeting during the International Conference on Health Care sponsored by this Council. I am happy that Mr. Albert Guttierrez, President and CEO of Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center, will also be attending.

In these early days of Advent, may Our Lord bless you with His grace and peace!
Meeting Highlights
2011 USCCB fall general assembly

APPROVED
- Optional memorials for Blessed John Paul II and Blessed Marianne Cope for U.S. liturgical calendar.
- Budget of $217.4 million for 2012 and 3 percent increase in diocesan assessments for 2013.
- Establishment of Subcommittee on Health Care Issues under Committee on Doctrine.
- New guidelines for administering USCCB national collections in dioceses.

HEARD REPORTS ON
- Threats to religious liberty in the U.S.
- Efforts to strengthen marriage.
- Situation in Iraq.
- Expanding the Project Rachel post-abortion healing program.
- New Roman Missal translation.

OTHER BUSINESS
- Heard Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of New York, in his first presidential address, encourage efforts to restore the lustre, credibility and beauty of church in eyes of its members and others.
- chose Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle as secretary-elect.
- learned that a new ordinariate will be created Jan. 1 to bring Anglicans into the Catholic Church.
- Welcomed Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò as new apostolic nuncio to the United States.

The Most Reverend Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has announced the following changes in priestly assignments, effective January 4, 2012:

- Reverend Lawrence Kramer, from Pastor of Saint Paul of the Cross Parish, Columbia City, to Senior Priest at Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne.
- Reverend Nicholas Niles, AJP, to Pastor of Saint Paul of the Cross, Columbia City.
- Reverend Andrew Curry, from Parochial Vicar of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne, to Parochial Vicar of Our Lady of Good Hope, Fort Wayne.

Fort Wayne Serra Club members Dave Steffen, president, and Nick Gray, coordinator of the award, present the Bishop’s Trophy to Bishop Luers High School at an assembly following the Nov. 1 Mass celebrated by Bishop John M. D’Arcy, bishop emeritus. The trophy is awarded to the winner of the “battle of the bishops” football game. This year, the Bishop Luers Knights received the honor.
In Africa, pope asks Church to be model of reconciliation

COTONOU, Benin (CNS) — On a three-day visit to Benin, Pope Benedict XVI urged African Catholics to witness the hope of the Gospel in their daily lives and make the Church a model of reconciliation for the entire continent.

In a particular way, the Church must be “attentive to the cry of the poor, the weak, the outcast,” the pope said at a Mass Nov. 20 for more than 50,000 people who filled a stadium in Cotonou.

“I would like to greet with affection all those persons who are suffering, those who are sick, those affected by AIDS or other illnesses, to all those forgotten by society. Have courage! The pope is close to you in his thoughts and prayers,” he said.

The 84-year-old pontiff delivered his homily in French, English and Portuguese, adding a few words in Fon, the local indigenous language. He occasionally wiped his brow as temperatures rose during the morning liturgy.

The pope stressed the urgency of evangelizing and said the Church must make a special effort to reach those “whose faith is weak” and who think selfish satisfaction and easy gain is the goal of human life.

“The Church in Benin has received much from her missionaries; she must in turn carry this message of hope to people who do not know or who no longer know the Lord Jesus,” he said.

The pope’s message was aimed beyond the borders of Benin, a small West African country with a population of nearly 9 million. He came to Africa to unveil a document, “Africæ Munus” (“The Commitment of Africa”), that outlined pastoral strategies and urged Catholics to become “apostles of reconciliation, justice and peace” across the troubled continent.

At every one of his public events, Africans — including many pilgrims who came from neighboring countries — gave the pontiff a lively welcome, blending song, dance and prayer in a spirit of religious celebration. The smiling pope clearly appreciated the reception.

One of the most animated encounters saw the pope surrounded by several hundred schoolchildren, who accompanied him in a rhythmic procession and cheered him inside a parish church. In a talk, the pope told the children to ask their parents to pray with them.

“Sometimes you may even have to push them a little. But do not hesitate to do so. God is that important!” he said.

Later he pulled a rosary from his pocket and asked the young people to learn how to pray it. Each child was given a rosary at the end before they left.

On Nov. 19, the pope traveled to the coastal city of Ouidah, a former slave trading post on the Atlantic, to sign his follow-up document to the 2009 Synod of Bishops for Africa.

The 138-page text said the Church should lead the way in promoting respect for human dignity and life at every stage, fighting against economic imbalance and environmental degradation, providing health care to those with AIDS and other diseases, educating the young and reconciling human hearts in places of ethnic tension.

In a brief talk before the signing, the pope said that in the face of Africa’s problems, “a Church reconciled within herself and among all her members can become a prophetic sign of reconciliation in society” and help guide the struggle against “every form of slavery” in the modern world.

Ouidah is known as a center of voodoo practices in West Africa, and in a meeting with Catholic faithful there the pope underlined the need to reject customs incompatible with Christianity. Understood correctly, he said, the Christian faith “liberates from occultism and vanquishes evil spirits, for it is moved by the power of the Holy Trinity itself.”

He also encouraged lay Catholics to defend the institution of the family “built according to the design of God” and the Christian understanding of marriage. Parents should transform family life through the power of prayer and by transmitting values to their children by their own example, he said.

In a Ouidah church, Pope Benedict prayed at the tomb of Cardinal Bernardin Gantin, who worked for many years with the future pope in the Roman Curia. The pope said that over the years, the two had met many times, engaged in deep discussions and prayed together.

Addressing diplomats, civil authorities and religious representatives Nov. 19 in Cotonou, the pope said Africa’s challenges reflect wider issues common to all humanity, including scandals and injustice, corruption and greed, and “too much violence, which leads to misery and death.”

He urged world leaders to put the common good at the center of their policies.

“From this place, I launch an appeal to all political and economic leaders of African countries and the rest of the world. Do not deprive your peoples of hope! Do not cut them off from their future by mutilating their present!” he said.

The pope also cautioned the international community against viewing Africa solely as a place of problems and failures. Often this perspective is fueled by prejudices, he said.

“It is tempting to point to what does not work; it is easy to assume the judgmental tone of the moralizer or of the expert who imposes his conclusions and proposals, at the end of the day, few useful solutions,” he said.

He warned of the related risk of seeing Africa only in terms of vast resources that can be easily exploited.

Relations between Christians and Muslims in Benin are generally good, and representatives of Islam were among those present at the Cotonou meeting. The pope emphasized that “everyone of good sense” understands the need for interreligious dialogue today and rejects the attempt to justify intolerance or violence.

“Aggression is an outmoded relational form, which appeals to superficial and ignoble instincts. To use the revealed Word, the sacred Scriptures or the name of God to justify our interests, our easy and convenient policies or our violence, is a very grave fault,” he said.
Conference attendees encouraged to be unabashedly Catholic

BY ANN CAREY

NOTRE DAME — Father Robert Barron, creator and host of the 10-part documentary series “Catholicism,” spoke about evangelizing the culture in his keynote address at the Notre Dame Ethics and Culture Center’s annual conference Nov. 10-12. His message was very simple and direct:

“What does it mean to evangelize? I submit that to evangelize is to announce the good news that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead,” said Father Barron, who is the Francis Cardinal George Professor of Faith and Culture at Mundelein Seminary in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

This evangelization can’t be a private activity, Father Barron stressed, but must be done “publicly and boldly,” and directed to every individual, institution and culture. Furthermore, he continued, the Church must come out from behind its walls to share its life everywhere and with everyone.

There are many ways to evangelize, Father Barron explained, and “the adventure of the spiritual life” is for each individual to discern how his own talents can and should be used in this effort.

Catholics should learn their faith tradition, he said, and Catholicism needs to recover “a certain radicality” rather than become “an echo of the wider culture.”

With his keynote address to a standing-room-only audience in Notre Dame’s McKenna Hall Auditorium, Father Barron set the tone for the conference’s topic of “Radical Emancipation: Confronting the Challenge of Secularism.” In the two days following Father Barron’s keynote, 148 papers were presented, and the attendance of 600-plus scholars and students set a record for an Ethics and Culture conference.

In another major address at the conference, philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, who splits his time between Notre Dame and London Metropolitan University, talked about how a theist — a person who believes in God — should deal with the secularization of their worldview on the existence of a creator who is unlike any of their creatures. Thus, he said the “blueprint” for Benedictine has been to follow the norms set out in Blessed John Paul II’s 1990 apostolic constitution on higher education, “Ex Corde Ecclesiae” (“From the Heart of the Church”). This does not mean creating a sort of 1950s “theme park” where people can escape from the world, he explained, but rather it means preparing students for the culture, not retreat from it.

“We think supporting and following the pope and bishops on this is something we ought to do,” Minnis said, and “that has been responsible for our success.”

Holy Cross Brother John Paige, president of Holy Cross College in Notre Dame, Ind., told a similar story. Having been founded in 1966, Holy Cross is the youngest of the Holy Cross colleges in the United States. It formerly was a two-year college, but in recent years re-set its curriculum for a four-year bachelor’s degree.

This re-set of the curriculum, Brother Paige said, was an opportunity to contribute in a practical sense to the Catholic college response to the secular culture. The purpose of a Holy Cross education, he continued, is to inform young people, but also to form them so they and the world will be transformed.

“The grounding construct” for Holy Cross College, Brother Paige continued, is “the competence to see and the courage to act,” thus providing a means for dealing with the secularization of society.

To this end, the Holy Cross practical liberal arts curriculum is built on four pillars, requiring every graduating student to (1) be involved in a professional internship; (2) do service learning in teams; (3) take part in a global experience domestically or with Holy Cross missionaries overseas; and (4) do a “capstone” presentation that articulates the student’s experience at Holy Cross and details how that experience will enable the student to benefit the world and others.

Brother Paige echoed the conviction of Stephen Minnis that the college must be unabashedly Catholic, and he stressed the importance of public witness. He related that at his inauguration ceremony this September, he and the theology faculty said the profession of faith publicly to demonstrate that they are part of the local and universal church.

“If you’re going to talk and say, you also have to walk and do,” Brother Paige said.

This 12th conference of the Ethics and Culture Center was the last conference overseen by David Solomon, a Notre Dame professor of philosophy, who founded the center and has been its director. He announced with great pleasure that the new director will be law professor O. Carter Snead, who plans to continue the annual conferences, with the 2012 event set for Nov. 8-10.
Dedicated Catholic Ministry Has Won Many Battles In Haiti’s War on Poverty

Seeing the emaciated young Haitian boy sitting listless under a tree — skin and eyes sallow from dehydration — American-born nurse, Bette Gabrian, felt convicted before God.

“Here, an hour-and-a-half from Miami, children are starving,” she said. “This can’t go on. God is watching. We have to do something.”

In addition to severe malnutrition, the five-year-old’s back bunched grotesquely due to Potts Disease-tuberculosis of the spine.

“What was happening to this boy happens all too often in rural Haiti,” explained Bette Gabrian, the Director of Public Health with the Haitian Health Foundation (HHF), a Catholic medical outreach with a long history of serving the country’s rural poor. “His mother came home to the mountains to deliver her baby. She breast-fed for awhile, then she went back to Port-au-Prince because she had to find a job.”

The boy’s grandmother, whose own energy had waned with age, was not capable of caring for him properly. Although she loved the boy, she nick-named “Raisin,” the grandmother was unable to recognize the danger he was in, and her poverty kept her from having an adequate supply of nutritious food on hand. As a result, the boy was slowly starving to death.

And, as Bette Gabrian rightly says, situations like this are common in Haiti, where the population is destitute, medical care is inadequate and food is scarce.

Because of this severe poverty, Bette has had to see countless children die from heartbreaking — and totally preventable — maladies. But she has also won many battles, conquering such illnesses as tuberculosis.

But the important thing about this situation is that the boy wasn’t simply brought home and left to fall back into his previous condition. We knew that was a risk, so we assigned a health agent to return to his village and do follow-ups,” Bette explained. “That’s the point of having resident village health workers, who are local people trained by HHF to provide health care to their own people. They do more than put a Band-Aid on the problem — they become part of a long-term process that improves the quality of life for the people in a meaningful way.”

Cross International Catholic Outreach fully supports HHF’s strategy, recognizing that the constant presence of a trained health worker greatly augments the care given by doctors who come to the village only for emergencies or for occasional wellness visits. Cross has supported these efforts and would like to find ways to expand and strengthen the outreach.

“Clearly, these resident health workers are essential to maintaining the work that’s been accomplished by doctors and nurses. HHF has shown the creativity and commitment that marks most Catholic ministries for the poor. This isn’t just a job for them. It’s a mission and ministry. It’s an expression of their love for God and love for others,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. “This is precisely the type of ministry we American Catholics should be supporting overseas.”

Cavnar added that HHF’s method of training local people to better their own circumstances is also right in line with how Cross works. It’s a method that is both empowering and extremely cost effective in the long run. And this too makes it a wonderful project for U.S. Catholics to support.

“Ultimately, it doesn’t take a huge grant of aid to save lives in rural Haiti,” said Cavnar. “Pennies can literally mean the difference between a child receiving a lifesaving antibiotic or losing a limb from a staff infection; an expectant mother getting access to medical care or dying in childbirth; or an infant getting vaccinated or succumbing to measles. It only costs us pennies to help — and therefore not helping can cost lives.

“Like Bette, we should all feel concerned when we see children suffering. We should all wonder what God thinks as He watches our response,” he added. “And as Bette says, something should be done... and it can. All it takes is a commitment to get involved and support dedicated Catholic ministries like HHF, and thereby stand with them in their struggle to help the poor. Then, when God watches... He will have reason to smile.”

Readers interested in hearing Bette Gebrian describe HHF’s lifesaving work in Haiti can listen to interviews posted at www.crosscatholic.org/podcast.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to Cross International Catholic Outreach and its work with Catholic ministries overseas, either use the enclosed postage-paid envelope or send contributions to Cross International Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00815, 490 White Pond Drive, PO Box 63, Akron, OH 44309-0063.

Cross Recognized, Endorsed by Nearly 50 U.S. Catholic Bishops

As Cross International Catholic Outreach (CICO) continues its range of relief work to help the poor overseas, its efforts are being recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S.

“We’ve received an impressive number of endorsements and letters of support from American Bishops and Archbishops — nearly 50 Catholic leaders. Last count,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. “They’re impressed by the fact that we’ve done outreaches in more than 40 countries and that we undertake a variety of projects; everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying safe water and supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor.”

Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis sent one of the more recent letters of encouragement, writing: “It is my hope that this ministry will continue to flourish and reach as many people as possible. I will inform the priests of the Archdiocese of St. Louis of the important work that Cross International Catholic Outreach does and elicit their prayerful and financial support for the service you provide to the less fortunate around the world.”

Bishop Kevin Vann of Fort Worth was just as enthusiastic about Cross Catholic and its mission. “I also know that many of the Bishops in Texas think very highly and endorse the work and mission of Cross International Catholic Outreach — as well as do other Bishops whom I know from my days of graduate studies in Rome. Please know of my prayers and support for this vital work...”

In Archbishop Gregory Aymond’s case, the endorsement came with a personal note of thanks for the role Cross Catholic played in helping families hit hard by Hurricane Katrina.

“I’m happy to acknowledge that Cross International Catholic Outreach was of tremendous help to the Archdiocese of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina,” he said.

Bishop Thomas Rodi of Biloxi had similar praise.

“Your quick response to the needs of the people in south Mississippi in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina will always be remembered and greatly appreciated,” he said. “Thank you for all the good you do, and may God bless you and your ministry.”

In addition to praising the work CICO accomplishes, many of the Bishops and Archbishops are also impressed by the unique collaborative relationship Cross has with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum in Rome. This allows the charity to participate in the mercy ministries of the Holy Father himself. In his praise of CICO, Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of Cincinnati underscored this unique connection.

“Cross International Catholic Outreach’s close collaboration with the Pontifical Council Cor Unum is a source of encouragement,” the Archbishop said. “The Holy See has unique knowledge of local situations throughout the world through its papal representatives in nearly two hundred countries and through its communications with Bishops and others who care for the poor and needy in every corner of the world.”

CICO president, Jim Cavnar, explained the significance of this connection.

“Our collaboration with Cor Unum allows us to fund outreaches in virtually any area of the world, and we have used that method in special cases — to help the victims of natural disasters, for example,” he said. “It only represents a small part of our overall ministry, but it can be a very important benefit in those special cases.”
Priest’s Timely Rescue of Haitian Orphans “Wouldn’t Have Been Possible” Without Help From U.S. Catholics

The men standing in Fr. Marc Boisvert’s doorway had terrible news. A nearby orphanage had just collapsed under financial pressure, and sixty-four boys were in urgent need of help. Many of the children had already gone hungry for days, and some were sick and needed medical attention.

No one else was capable of dealing with the problem — could he help? Having worked with orphans for several years, Fr. Marc could easily imagine what the children were going through as they awaited word of their fate. First there would be shock, then loss and emptiness, followed by fear. Ultimately, these children would relive the full, crippling sense of abandonment that overwhelms all orphans.

“When I heard about these kids, my mind raced, and I wondered if I could do anything about it. My own orphanage already housed hundreds of children and we were financially strapped ourselves,” Fr. Marc recalled. “I knew I had the heart for the job, but there were so many practical and financial hurdles to overcome. Could I afford to take those children in? And on the other hand — could I afford not to? This is Haiti, I thought. What are their chances if I turn my back on them? They might not survive.”

Knowing that some kind of outside help would be necessary to properly feed, shelter and educate the new children, Fr. Marc quickly contacted several large international charities seeking their support. All of them turned him down... except one.

Within hours of hearing from Fr. Marc about the plight of the orphans and his desire to help, Cross International Catholic Outreach made a firm pledge of support and wired all of the funds needed to get the rescue underway. Every one of those children was saved.

“The first week involved some adjustments,” Fr. Marc explained. “They came in with nothing but the clothes on their backs, no shoes and many were clearly malnourished. They ate ravenously that first night. The next morning at breakfast, one of the kids seemed surprised and wondered if the food he was being served would be his only meal for the day. He wasn’t used to eating every day — and certainly never more than once a day.”

Over the next few weeks, Fr. Marc turned these new “visitors” into family. Meanwhile, Cross International has had to mobilize its programs to get the financial support that was needed.

“It’s been a big undertaking,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. “Fr. Marc had to have beds, sheets and towels, clothing, shoes and school supplies, among other things. Funds were also needed to bring in a doctor to examine and treat children that were ill or suffering from malnutrition. Now we are working on supplying food and other day-to-day needs.”

For Fr. Marc, it has been a tremendous relief to have so willing a partner help handle the emergency.

“Here in Haiti, a Catholic priest is constantly in the midst of life-or-death situations — people come to him because they’re desperate for food or have dying children in need of medicines or face some other urgent needs,” he explained. “When they come to us for help, we want to respond, but we can’t unless we have outside resources — food for the hungry, medicines to treat the sick or the other materials needed to get the job done. It’s a real blessing to have Cross as a partner in times like those. In fact, without their support, taking in these additional orphans wouldn’t have been possible... and these children wouldn’t have the peace and hope they enjoy today.”

Although the story of the rescued orphans is still unfolding, Cross is committed to providing Fr. Marc with the tools he needs to care for them... and give them new hope. To accomplish this, the ministry hopes to secure support from Catholics in the U.S.

“I’m confident that when Catholics in America hear about this urgent need and about Fr. Marc’s goal of rescuing these children, they will want to help. We Catholics value life as a gift from God, and we have always supported our missionaries overseas,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross International Catholic Outreach. “This situation gives us an opportunity to put our beliefs into action. Our involvement is meaningful and it will have a tangible impact — these children will have hope and a better life because we chose to become involved.”

In addition to seeking help from U.S. Catholics for these rescued orphans, Cross is also hoping to gain support for Fr. Marc Boisvert’s larger goal — the development of “Project Espwa,” a major housing and self-help program for Haiti’s neediest orphans. It’s goal is to take children off the dangerous streets in Haiti and place them in a safe, rural setting where they can recuperate their childhood and take part in educational programs that will help shape a new future.

“Espwa means hope, and that is what this project is all about. It includes safe housing and food — the basic necessities of life... but its staff is ultimately working toward self-sufficiency for the children who will grow up there,” Cavnar said. “Their goal to educate the children and teach them skills on the farm is a wonderful plan we should get behind and support. This approach does more than meet the immediate needs of these children. It gives them the gift of a brighter future. It literally gives them espwa — hope.”

Navy Chaplain Leaves Success, Opportunities to Accept Christ’s Call for “A Few Good Men”

While serving in the U.S. Navy, Chaplain Marc Boisvert, a veteran of “Desert Shield/Desert Storm,” made a trip to Haiti. He went, in part, to confirm stories he had been told about the plight of the poor living there.

What he saw changed his life forever — not simply because it altered his perspective on poverty or changed his political views, but because it moved him to act.

“What I saw — particularly the condition of the children — demanded my immediate action. I saw life or death situations, and I knew I could help... but only if I got deeply involved,” Fr. Marc recalled.

After resigning his commission in the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps, Fr. Marc was honorably discharged as a Lieutenant Commander.

“I sold most of my worldly possessions — all 17 of them — and moved lock, stock and barrel to Haiti. That was on January 1st, 1998,” He recalls. Today, Fr. Marc directs one of Haiti’s finest Christian orphanages, serving hundreds of children (see story above).

“You don’t have to be a brain surgeon to see how devastating poverty is for children here. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere and that is almost a death sentence to the kids here. Poor sanitation, polluted water, no access to decent medical care, no money for school and often no money for food.”

Fr. Marc, while serving in the U.S. Navy
Advent can be a time of individual meditation or family togetherness even amidst the breakneck hustle-bustle, as the Church and its people prepare to celebrate our Savior’s birth. Today’s Catholic offers this Advent calendar as a daily reminder to focus on the reason behind the season and to deepen our faith through action in the anticipation of the coming of the Lord. Each day offers an activity to inspire fun and faith-filled participation during these 29 days.

**HOMEMADE GINGERBREAD**

Pre-heat the oven to 375 degrees, and have ready a 9 inch x 9 inch by 2 inch baking pan. Do not grease or flour the pan.

Measure 1 cup molasses, light or dark, with a glass (liquid) measuring cup. Pour the molasses into a reasonably large bowl, perhaps 2-3 quart size. Pour 1/2 cup boiling water into the now-melted molasses to form a syrup. Pour in the molasses from the measuring cup. Mix in 1 cup sugar, 1 cup brown sugar, 1 cup white sugar, 2 teaspoons ground ginger, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves, and 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice. Stir until well combined.

Mix in 2 cups flour, preferably unbleached. Stir just until ingredients are mixed and moist; this is a job for a light hand with a wooden spoon, not an electric mixer.

Pour the mixture into the prepared pan. Bake in the oven at 375 degrees for 25-35 minutes. When the cake is done, it will pull away slightly from the pan and a toothpick inserted in the middle of the cake will come out clean. Allow to cool briefly, and, if desired, sprinkle powdered sugar on top. Best when warm, but entirely acceptable to eat cold.

This recipe is from the website www.cptryon.org.
BISHOP D’ARCY CELEBRATES MASS LAUNCHING YEAR OF THE BROTHER

Bishop John M. D’Arcy, bishop emeritus of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, right, was the celebrant and homilist at a Mass of thanksgiving celebrating the Year of the Brother at St. Joseph Chapel in Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame on Nov. 20. Bishop D’Arcy spoke of the canonization of St. Andre Bessette, a Brother of Holy Cross, who was canonized Oct. 17, 2010, by Pope Benedict XVI. Bishop D’Arcy praised the Brothers of Holy Cross for being missionaries to the area even before the current diocese was formed. The celebration was hosted by the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross, Holy Cross College was formed. The celebration was hosted by the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross, Holy Cross College

FORT WAYNE — The University of Saint Francis will offer a range of activities for the public’s enjoyment in December during its annual Christmas at USF. The main campus is located at 2701 Spring St. A schedule of festivities follows.

Christmas in the Castle

Dec. 3, 4 and Dec. 10, 11, from noon to 6 p.m.

Historic Brookside will be decorated for Christmas by local florists and designers and is located near Mirror Lake on the Spring Street side of campus, with parking in the East Campus lot off Leesburg Road. Tickets may be purchased on the days of the event in the lower lobby of the Pope John Paul II Center, where the tour begins. Tickets can also be purchased online at https://commerce.cashnet.com/sf-tw-in. Admission is $5 per person, $20 maximum per family.

Seniors are invited to Senior Day in the Castle, from 2-5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 9. Admission charge for the day is $3. Groups can make reservations by calling Sister Gayle Rushasman at (260) 399-770, ext. 6706.

Star of Bethlehem

Saturday, Dec. 3, at 3 and 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 4, at 1:30 and 3 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 9, at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 10, at 3 and 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 11, at 5 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 16, at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 17, at 3 and 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 18, at 5 p.m.

Gather under the Mideastern sky of 3 B.C. and follow the star of the Wise Men. During the live portion of the show, planetarium staff will guide visitors to the wonders of this winter’s Fort Wayne night sky. The Schouweiler Planetarium is located in Achatz Hall of Science, with parking off Leesburg Road. Admission: adults $4, senior citizens and under age 18 $3, $14 maximum per family. Purchase tickets at the door.

Fair Trade Bazaar

Sunday, Dec. 4, from noon to 5:30 p.m.

Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) present high-quality fairly traded handicrafts from disadvantaged producers all over the world at the Fair Trade Alternative Shopping Bazaar at the Pope John Paul II Center (main lobby).

Living Nativity

Sunday, Dec. 4, at 6 p.m.

The character of Saint Francis will narrate the Christmas story as it unfolds, and all gathered will sing “Silent Night.” The Living Nativity will be presented in the amphitheater next to the Pope John Paul II Center, with parking off Leesburg Road. No admission charge. A free petting zoo with the animals for the Living Nativity will be available for children from 5-5:50 p.m. at the Living Nativity site.

Lighting of the Lake

Sunday, Dec. 4, at 6 p.m.

Vigil lights will encircle the area of Mirror Lake closest to Spring Street for a shining symbol of Christmas. Luminaries may be dedicated at $10 each to a loved one, in memory of someone special, in recognition of a special occasion, or just to wish a student good luck with final exams. Call (260) 399-8037 to order luminaries by Dec. 1. No charge for admission.

USF Share the Warmth

The University of Saint Francis teams up with the Volunteer Center RSVP to bring a little warmth to the community. Collection bins will be located around campus for donations of hats, scarves, mittens and gloves. Drop contributions in one of the bins, take it to Brookside or bring it to any of the events listed. Donations collected from Dec. 1-11.

Christmas Music Concert

Sunday, Dec. 4, at 7 p.m.

University of Saint Francis musical groups will perform traditional carols and classical arrangements by a variety of composers and arrangers. The concert is at the North Campus auditorium (across from Brookside). No charge for admission.

Love and Blessings

At St. Mary’s Church • Bristol, Indiana
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Hours: Sunday - Thursday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Saturday, after evening Mass

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Harvesting Kindness at St. John the Baptist

At St. John the Baptist School, Fort Wayne, the students engaged in activities focused on anti-bullying in a program called “Let’s Harvest Kindness” from Nov. 14-18. A presentation by Sandy Meyer from SCAN gave the students examples of bullying and skills to deal with it. Activities also included a canned food drive, which brought in over 1,700 cans, kindness awards and a poster campaign. Fifth-graders Maciah Henley, right, and Noah Green, left, stand in front of the no bullying banner created by the students.
PNW — A new service for people in need of University of Saint Francis transcripts is available through the university registrar’s office.

Those needing transcripts can now use a link on the registrar’s office web page, complete a transcript order form, and then pay for the service by credit card. Transcripts are $5 each, with a processing fee of $2.25. The service is available 24 hours, seven days a week. The registrar’s office web page is at sf.edu/s/registrar.

Alumni and others previously enrolled at USF will benefit because they can order and pay for their transcripts electronically rather than calling USF with their request and then mailing a check, said USF Registrar Frank Connor.

“We are pleased to offer this new service, which simplifies the process through which alumni and others previously enrolled at USF can receive a transcript to advance their professional goals,” Connor said. Those with questions about the ordering of USF transcripts can contact Assistant Registrar Julie Callahan at (260) 399-7700, ext. 6528 or jacallahan@s.f.edu.

Knights present funds to cancer services

FORT WAYNE — The Knights of Columbus Council 451 sponsored a spaghetti dinner for cancer services.

The dinner in the amount of $517 was the speaker at the Oct. 25 fall luncheon of the Red Hat Rockies at the Plymouth Country Club.

Zeltwanger provided a brief history of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, who operate Ancilla College. The sisters first came from Germany to Hessen Cassel in the Diocese of Fort Wayne on Aug. 15, 1851.

The PHC is an international congregational of apostolic women religious within the Roman Catholic Church. They minister to the poor, the sick and to children in the U.S., Mexico, Germany, England, the Netherlands, India, Brazil, Kenya and Nigeria.

With prayer and community living as their foundation, they minister in rural, urban and inner-city settings in the Midwest.

Focused on partnering in the work of the Spirit, they invite others to join them in various facets of education, pastoral and social work, neighborhood-based health ministries, spiritual guidance and care for the environment.

Their Donaldson-based ministries are Ancilla Beef and Grain Farm, Catherine Kasper Life Center, Earthworks, an environmental education center, Lindenwood Retreat and Conference, and the MoonTree Community, an artistic movement.

However, the Poor Handmaids are recognized more by the love and simplicity with which they serve than by any particular ministry.

Zeltwanger emphasized that “intergenerational” is the key word — people of all ages interacting, sharing, learning and growing together.

“Imagine,” he said, “young adults interacting with and learning from their peers and their elders. Imagine also mature men and women living and learning together with bright, creative college-age students in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.

“Live and learn together,” he said, “in a partnership on Union Road.”

“For example,” Zeltwanger added, “nursing students at the Catherine Kasper Home for clinical — athletic team members interacting with Maria Center and CKH residents.”

Kristy Rupert, a senior nursing student, spoke briefly about how she is privileged to be working with the Ancilla program.
Campaign do’s and don’ts remain the same, but new mood seen in US

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The names on the ballot may change from one election to another, but the guidelines for what tax-exempt religious organizations can and cannot do in a political campaign remain basically unchanged.

“The law says that organizations exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which includes charities and churches, may not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office,” the Internal Revenue Service says on its website.

That means no endorsements, checklists, guides promoting one candidate over another or sample ballots by tax-exempt parishes and organizations or their publications.

But it does not prevent religious leaders or members of other tax-exempt organizations from speaking out on the issues, organizing voter registration drives or nonpartisan educational forums or publishing candidates’ responses to a questionnaire as long as the questions cover a broad range of issues and do not reflect any bias.

“The rules are still the same. There has been nothing that has changed substantially” since the 2008 presidential elections, said Deirdre Dessingue, associate general counsel at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. “But there has been a change in the mood.”

She cited several factors affecting that change in mood — a 2010 U.S. Supreme Court on corporate contributions to political campaigns that led some to question the limits on political intervention by religious organizations; a district court ruling in Minnesota that IRS determinations about whether to investigate a church’s tax-exempt status were being made by officials at too low a level; and continuing efforts by the Alliance Defense Fund to draw the IRS into a battle with a church whose pastor has endorsed a political candidate from the pulpit.

More than 500 Protestant ministers from 46 states and Puerto Rico participated in the Alliance Letter, PAGE 13

LETTER, PAGE 13

Advent is time to sharpen focus on Jesus

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

First Sunday of Advent

Mk 13:33-37

This weekend the Church begins Advent. It also begins the use of biblical readings from Year B of its three-year cycle.

It also is the start of a new liturgical year. Each liturgical year is carefully planned so that the seasons, and the major feasts, guide us through our very own worship into a closer relationship with God in Christ.

Finally, and important for everyone, this is the weekend when the Church begins to use the new English translation of the Roman Missal.

The first reading is from the third section of Isaiah, composed when the Jews were in a quite difficult situation. Years before, the exiles had been allowed to return to the Holy Land from Babylon, but this return brought the exiles home to no paradise. Life was miserable.

The prophet called for faith in God, not only as almighty, but as true to the covenant, to the belief that God would protect the chosen people.

The prophet appeals to God, in the name of the people, for relief but without saying that the people are being treated unfairly, at least in terms of God’s care for them.

The prophet makes clear that sin has led the people away from God, and this estrangement has produced their woes.

Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians provides the next reading. Counseling the Corinthians, Paul was a challenge for Paul. Not only did temptation and vice surround them at every side, but also they argued among themselves. Paul had to call them to faithfulness, and also he had to try to influence them to put their differences with each other aside.

He saw disciples as having enormous potential, able themselves to draw more closely to God and also to infuse the goodness of Christianity into the circles in which they moved.

St. Mark’s Gospel is the source of the last reading. It offers us a theme found quite often in the New Testament, namely that Christ will come to earth again. In this Second Coming the Lord will be the great victor and the judge of all creation.

By the time the Gospels were written, even in the case of the Gospel of Mark, the oldest of the four as they now exist, Christians were numerous enough, and geographically distributed enough, to catch the public eye, but not numerous enough or powerful enough to stand against their enemies. The culture was an enemy. Soon, the political system would be an enemy.

Problems, if not dangers, lay ahead. The atmosphere was tense, uncertain and frightening.

Thoughts of the Second Coming naturally were appealing. The reading, quoting the Lord, reminds us that we in fact do not know the future. Life for any one of us can change dramatically and suddenly.

The only permanent reality is God. If we are with God, we need not fear.

Reflection

The new translation means much more than semantics and translating Latin into English. True, it is an attempt to conform the English version of the Missal to the Latin. It also provides an opportunity to ponder what the words of the Missal, of Catholic worship, say. In turn, this study prompts the questions of how much religion means to us? Are we good Catholics? Mark’s Gospel greatly assists us. Nothing else is as permanent, or as important, as the reality of God.

Advent is an opportunity to achieve union with God, to realize God’s love for us.

The very busy nature of the season merely serves to remind us to sharpen our focus. If we respond to this opportunity, then Christmas becomes not a national holiday, not even a religious commemoration, but the moment when we truly bring God into our lives, having prepared ourselves for this wondrous encounter.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 63:16b-17, 19bct,4b,7-7 Ps 80:2,3,15-16, 18-19 I Cor 1:39 Mk 13:33-37
Monday: Is 21:5 Ps 122:1-9 Mt 8:5-11
Tuesday: Is 11:1-10 Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17 Lk 10:21-24
Wednesday: Rom 1:19-18 Ps 19:5 Mt 4:18-22
Thursday: Is 26:1-6 Ps 118:1-9, 19-21, 25-27a Mt 7:21, 24-27
Saturday: Is 30:19-21, 23-26 Ps 147:1-6 Mt 9:35-10:1, Sa 6-8

Living with a grateful heart

Many years ago a missionary friend of mine told me about a beautiful tradition practiced by the people who live in Uganda, East Africa. From a very young age children are taught to live with grateful hearts. The word they use is “webali,” which is an expression of gratitude for all God’s gifts no matter how seemingly insignificant.

For example, any time a person goes to another’s home, the host thanks that person for taking the time out of his day to visit and the guest thanks the host for welcoming him into his home. Or if someone has a conversation with another, that person thanks her for taking the time to speak and listen to her. Ugandan people express their gratitude for every human act of kindness no matter how big or small. It has become part of their culture.

When I heard about this life of appreciation and gratitude it left quite an impression on me. I believe we can learn a lot from our Ugandan brothers and sisters.

It can be so easy to take our gifts for granted. I know I do sometimes, guilty of this. I expect the heat to work when it is cold, that I will have the food I need when I am hungry for it, and I will have health care when I need it. There are so many things in life I just expect and do not recognize as gifts.

It would be good for each of us to develop an attitude of thanksgiving and gratitude. One way we can do this is to spend a quiet time reflecting upon all God has given us; especially those things we often take for granted or just expect.

Why wait until we meet a blind or deaf person to thank God for our gifts of sight and hearing?

SISTER MARGIE LAVONIS, CSC

Let’s be grateful. Let us live as Eucharistic people and, like the Ugandans, let thanksgiving become an attitude in our hearts and a way of life. Let us appreciate all that we have while we have it and not take for granted our other gifts for granted.

Sister Margie Lavonis, CSC, works for the Sisters of the Holy Cross communications department.
Vaccinating our children for sexually transmitted diseases?

Last month, an advisory committee of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta recommended that 9-12-year-old boys be vaccinated against the human papillomavirus (HPV), a virus transmitted through sexual contact. The goal of the recommendations was to prevent cancers caused by HPV, such as certain cancers of the digestive tract.

The same committee had already recommended, back in March of 2007, that girls and young women between the ages of nine and 26 be vaccinated against HPV, to help prevent various cancers of the reproductive tract, such as cervical cancer.

While the motivation to prevent cancer and diseases is clearly good, a universal recommendation of this type raises ethical concerns. Because the recommendations of the committee relate to important aspects of human behavior and sexuality at formative ages for children and adolescents, parents need to look at the psychological and social messages they might be conveying by choosing to vaccinate their children against HPV. Beyond all the medical considerations, parents also have a duty to inoculate their children against harmful and immoral behaviors. Thus, decisions about vaccinations ultimately need to be made on a case-by-case basis within a particular family.

Parents are often right to be concerned that getting their kids vaccinated for a sexually transmitted virus could be taken to signal tacit approval of pre-marital sex. Young people might surmise that their parents and physicians do not believe they can remain chaste, but instead begrudgingly expect them to become sexually active prior to marriage.

The widespread phenomenon of condom distribution among youth clearly conveys the same message, and young people today are not fools; they perceive how the culture around them has caved in on this question, no longer insisting, or even believing, that they have the wherewithal to refrain from pre-marital sex. Girls and boys are no longer treated as free individuals who can make higher and better choices when encouraged and supported, but instead are treated as mere creatures of sexual necessity.

I recall one time speaking with a middle-aged woman about the CDC vaccination recommendations. “When I was a girl, if my mom had taken me to get vaccinated for a sexually transmitted disease, I would have been horrified,” she said. “I would have wondered to myself, ‘What does she suppose I am, a tramp or something?’”

Parents do need to be careful about conveying a sense of fatalism when it comes to questions of the sexual behavior of their kids. Against the backdrop of a highly permissive culture, parents, who are the first educators of their children in sexual matters, are right to be concerned about sending conflicting messages.

Pursuing universal vaccination for sexually transmitted diseases like HPV could have the unintended effect of setting up a false sense of security, a kind of mental “safety net,” for boys and girls who are potentially sexually active. In the hormonally-charged environment of adolescence, young people might come to believe that the risks of premarital sex would be reduced by the vaccination, to the point that they would be “protected” and could risk promiscuous behaviors, when in fact, they would be increasing their odds of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) of any kind.

To consider an example where using the HPV vaccine might be sensible, we could consider a young woman who had been chaste all her life but who was preparing to marry a man whom she suspected had been sexually active (and might therefore expose her to HPV in their marriage). She could decide, prior to marriage, that receiving the HPV vaccination would be reasonable, and even without any suspicions about her future spouse’s past behavior, she might still prefer to leave nothing to chance.

Evaluating the potential risks and benefits of vaccinating boys or young men would similarly vary in a manner that depends on the HPV vaccination would be reasonable. Also, at younger ages, children may not need to know the exact purposes behind a vaccination. They could simply be told by their parents (if they even asked) that the vaccine would protect them against possible cancers in the future.

Parents themselves, however, might still have doubts about the safety of the HPV vaccine, given that its side effects and complications are still being actively debated and studied. They might still have questions about its long-term benefits since its after-five-year window of protection, and has only been surmised, but never scientifically demonstrated, to prevent cancer at a timepoint far in the future.

In sum, many factors need to be considered. Rather than a universal mandate, a careful, case-by-case risk/benefit analysis ought to be made by families to determine whether the HPV vaccine is a reasonable choice, not only medically, but also in terms of where a young person may be in his or her life as a “moral agent.”

Father Tad Pacholczyk

Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D., is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.

Although both investigations were eventually closed, James Bopp Jr., an attorney representing Catholic Answers, announced Oct. 21 that the organization would ask the U.S. Supreme Court “to let it sue the IRS for improperly taxing its constitutionally protected political speech.” Lower federal courts said Catholic Answers had no standing to sue because the money had been refunded.

This allows the IRS to harass and penalize nonprofits who discuss public officials who are also running for office while leaving those nonprofits without any recourse: simply pay extra taxes for 2004 and 2005, but the IRS returned the taxes with interest in 2009, saying that the alleged political activity “was not willful and flagrant.” Catholic Answers contended throughout the process that the e-letters were not political activity.

While it is important to be clear about what we can’t do, the most important thing to focus on is what we can do,” it says. “In a democracy, loving our neighbor and caring for the least among us means supporting leaders and policies that promote the common good and protect society’s most vulnerable members. Helping Catholics to recognize and act on this dimension of their faith is an essential task for parish leaders.”


The U.S. bishops’ “Faithful Citizenship” website at www.faithfulcitizenship.org offers guidelines for parishes that focus as much on the do’s of political responsibility as on the don’ts. Based on this reasoning, it is crucial that we focus on what we can do.”

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Gospel for November 20, 2011
Matthew 25:31-46

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

Saint of the Week
Blessed Mary Anna Sala
1829-1891
November 24

The fifth of eight children in an Italian family, Mary Anna went in 1842 to a boarding school operated by the Sisters of St. Marcellina. She earned a teaching diploma in four years and wanted to join the order, but had to wait because of her mother’s illness and family’s financial reverses. After assisting her family, she entered the congregation in 1848 and professed her vows in 1852. Over a 40-year teaching career in the order’s schools, she was both popular and successful, one of her students was the mother of Pope Paul VI. She died of throat cancer and was beatified in 1980.
Saint Joseph’s, Bishop Luers head to state finals at Lucas Oil Stadium

BY CHUCK FREEBY

F

or the second straight year, Saint Joseph’s and Bishop Luers will represent the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend at the Indiana High School Athletic Association football state finals.

Both schools punched their tickets to this weekend’s action with semistate victories. Saint Joseph’s downed West Lafayette, 21-13, to earn a spot in the Class 3-A state finals. Defending state champion Bishop Luers outlasted Bremen, 35-21, to return to the Class 2-A championship game.

“It’s something that a lot of really, really good coaches and teams either don’t experience or rarely get to experience,” said Saint Joseph’s Coach Ben Downey. “So it’s something we really, really good coaches and teams either don’t experience or rarely get to experience.”

As usual for the St. Louis Knights, it’s a team effort. From the lineup of nine seniors, none are more essential than senior Nick Carmola to the offense and senior Pat Klima to the defense. After taking a 7-0 lead on a seven-yard touchdown run, Luers padded the margin with a 61-yard pass play from James Knapek to Michael Rogers.

Bremen closed the gap to seven and the Lions were driving towards a tying score in the fourth when Logan Dorman fumbled and ran 62 yards for the touchdown to make it a 28-14 game.

Two plays later, Andrew Spencer intercepted a pass and raced 30 yards to paydirt to help seal the win.

“Defensive wins championships,” said Smith, who ran for 107 yards. “We have some amazing coaches in Matt Milhouse and Coach Lew Goodwin, and they do a great job on the practice field getting us prepared.”

Coach Matt Lindsay will look to tie a state record with his ninth state title when the Knights face Evansville Mater Dei Friday night at Lucas Oil Stadium.

“This is a great feat by these young men,” said a humble Downey. “Every team is a different entity, a different mindset. This is a different football team than the one we had last year.”

Green League tournament champs

The St. Charles Borromeo seventh-grade volleyball team were crowned the CYO Green League champions. The team consists of Ashley Burns, Linhsey Trinh, Marissa Godfrey, Abby Bojrab, Heather Nellum, Morgan Fuze, Alaina Schenkel, Laura Eckrich, Maddy Omo, Mckenzie Hartig, Miranda Bertoli, Tiffany May and Coach Cindy Peroraro and Coach Neal Godfrey.

FORT WAYNE — St. Joseph/St. Elizabeth (SJSE) turned in some exceptional times for the 2011 cross-country season led by top runners Tyler Goche and Josie Burton. The runners were coached by Manual Martinez and also included students from Queen of Angels school.

Martinez said, “The season was a huge success due to the commitment of the kids on the team. They not only trained hard in practices, but also ran over the weekends and while on vacations. Their desire was evident at the invitations where they would compete as best as they could.”

Chris Strack and Ella Machall were honored as Most Improved Runners of each squad. Other boys’ members were Noah Johnson, Jacob Jehle, Noah Brown and Stephen Busch, while Madison Busch, Kaithin Emmett, Grace Strack, Margaret Cicchiello and Claire Burton rounded out the girls’ roster.

Of the nine races on the schedule, the boys’ best race came at the Huntington Invitational. Many personal records were achieved while they ended up with the best finish in any year as runner-up.

The girls’ team had their best showing at the LutherRUN Invitational where they finished third out of seven teams and all set personal records.

Martinez is hopeful the team’s successes will continue and said, “With many returning, next year’s season looks to be even better.”

“Anyone who would like to try cross country, can join us over the summer for our base running,” he said. “If your school doesn’t have cross country as a sport, feel free to call SJSE for more information.”

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Misc. Happenings

Corpus Christi plans Christmas breakfast
South Bend — Corpus Christi Parish will have a breakfast Sunday, Dec. 11, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the gym. Egg bake, biscuits and sausage gravy, fruit, cinnamon rolls, sausage links, orange juice and coffee will be served. Tickets are $6 for adults, $5 for seniors, $3 children 12 and under or $20 for a family.

Special visit from Santa
South Bend — St. Nicholas (Mikola) party will be held at St. Casimir Parish, 1308 W. Dunham St., Saturday, Dec. 10, at 6:30 p.m. in the parish annex. Homemade pierogi, beef, noodles, and coffee cake will be served. Polish and English Christmas Carols will be sung. Adult tickets are $6, children (5-12) $3. Tickets can be obtained at the parish office, 2505 W. Grace St. until Monday, Dec. 5.

The Christ Child Society plans annual cookie walk
Fort Wayne — The holiday cookie walk and bake sale will be Saturday, Dec. 3, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Church at Auburn and Wallen Road in the church hall. Proceeds benefit the Christ Child Society's holiday program of Christmas music and gifts for children 12 and under.

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, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or email: ftcgfan@diocesefwbs.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.

Culver Academy presents program at Ancilla College
Donaldson — The Culver Academies Choir and members of the Culver Academies Band and Orchestra will present a free program of Christmas music and other selections on Sunday, Dec. 4, at 3 p.m. EST in the Ancilla Domini Chapel. A reception will follow in Cana Hall in the lower level of the PHiC Ministry Center. For information call (574) 936-9936.

Cookie walked planned for Mishawaka Catholic
Mishawaka — The Mishawaka Catholic early childhood program will have a cookie walk and pictures with Santa from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 4, on the St. Joseph campus. Cookies are $6 a dozen and various Santa photo packages will be available. For information call Jackie Maloney at (574) 257-8307.

‘Messiah’ performed
Fort Wayne — The Bach Collegium will sponsor a “Messiah” sing-along on Sunday, Dec. 4 at 2 p.m. at Queen of Angels Church, 1500 W. State St. Music will be provided, or singers may bring their own scores. This is a highly interactive way to experience the wonderful music of Handel’s great masterpiece. Homemade cookies and coffee will be served at intermission. There is a suggested $5 donation.

Little Flower hosts Advent retreat
South Bend — Little Flower Parish will host an Advent retreat titled “For What Do You Long?” on Saturday, Dec. 3, from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the parish center, located at 54191 N. Ironwood Rd. Participants are asked to bring a Bible and a bandanna (scarf) for this retreat that includes prayer, Scripture, quiet time, large-group and small-group activities. Bring your own lunch. To reserve a seat RSVP to (574) 273-9722 or ftcgfan@diocesefwbs.org by Dec. 2. Call (574) 418-9758 by Dec. 2 for information.

Advent Lessons and Carols Service
Notre Dame — Advent Lessons and Carols will be sung Sunday, Dec. 4, at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, University of Notre Dame at 7:15 p.m. All basilica choirs, including the Notre Dame Liturgical Choir, Women's Liturgical Choir, Folk Choir, Handbell Choir and Basilica Schola will perform. Admission is free. Handicap accessible.

Fundraisers

Knights plan fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 4263 will have a breakfast Saturday, Dec. 11, from 9 a.m. to noon at St. Pius X. Adults $6, children 6-12 $3.

Holiday Happenings at Hannah's House
South Bend — Hannah’s House will host Holiday Happenings, a fundraiser dinner and auction on Dec. 3, at Hilton Garden Inn’s Gillespie Center, 53995 Indiana State Route 933. Tickets are $75 and must be purchased ahead by calling Tamara Griffin at (574) 254-5309.

Holy Cross School plans fundraiser
South Bend — Holy Cross School will host the Crusader Express Saturday, Dec. 3, at Holy Cross School. Join school parents, parishioners, alumni and friends for a night of fine food and drink, silent and live auction. Call the parish office at (574) 233-2179 for tickets and information.

Craft Shows

Winter bazaar
South Bend — The Altar and Rosary Society of St. Augustine Parish, 1501 Washington St., will have a winter bazaar Saturday, Nov. 26, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 27, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. BBQ chicken, Christmas items and white elephant table will be offered.

Christmas bazaar
South Bend — A Christmas bazaar will be held at Holy Cross Parish, 1020 Wilber St., Saturday, Dec. 10, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Homemade crafts and foods, raffles and lunch available.

St. Jude plans Christmas boutique
Fort Wayne — St. Jude Parish will have a Christmas boutique Saturday, Nov. 26, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. All crafts handmade and lunch will be available.

Women’s retreat planned
Plymouth — St. Michael Parish will have a women’s retreat, “Finding God in the Ordinary,” on Saturday, Dec. 3, at St. Michael School from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Women of all ages will gather to enjoy fellowship, speakers and prayer. Lunch will be provided. Tickets are $10. To register, call (574) 936-6065.

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Lady of Hungary are much lower than public schools, yet it has better test scores, and the children are getting a better education.

"So winning in education is about the children," Daniels continued. "And frankly, I believe public education will win with the broadening of options that are out there. Already we’re seeing public schools shaping up, working, saying ‘Listen, we can do better’.

Daniels said it would be fine with him if Indiana never had a large voucher program as long as public schools do a job that parents feel good about. He also observed that per-pupil dollars in the public schools actually go up because of the voucher program, for only 50 or 90 percent of per-pupil cost goes to the private school with the student (depending on family income). The rest of the funds stay in the public system.

When a reporter asked why he thought parental choice in schools was important, Daniels said: "It’s a matter of social justice."

If people don’t understand that, he continued, they should come to a neighborhood of low-income families like that surrounding Our Lady of Hungary. Until the voucher program arrived, he explained, most people in that neighborhood did not have the choice of their wealthier counterparts to move to a better school district or pay tuition to a private school. The voucher program gives lower-income families the same freedom to do what they think is best for their children, he said.

"All we did in this program is say that every parent, just because you don’t have a lot of money, you can still have the same freedom to do what you think is best for your child, and by the way we trust you to decide what the best school is," Daniels said.

Our Lady of Hungary and its surrounding neighborhood are a "classic example" of the people the voucher program was designed to help, he added.

The young people I just saw here today, preschool through eighth grade, I’m convinced are in a great place for them, and we have to win this battle for the future one child at a time," Daniels said.

Jeanetta White, the mother of four of those children, was on hand to see the governor. She told Today’s Catholic that she was not happy with her children’s public school and was looking for an alternative. White, who is a graduate of Our Lady herself, said the vouchers enabled her to enroll her children, and they are happy and thriving.

Father Bauman said that the entire parish is experiencing a steady, consistent growth, as families are moving back into the neighborhood, attracted by the large homes. Mass attendance has increased steadily, and he has added an additional Spanish Mass, celebrating two Spanish and two English Masses on Sundays. Three-fourths of the children with vouchers are actually Our Lady parishioners.

Father Bauman said that the children and staff were “very, very excited” that Gov. Daniels chose their school for his first voucher school visit in the state.

“It means a great deal to us because we are a depressed area here,” he observed. “Wages are not high, and a lot of people are suffering. So to have him come here and to be witness, just to share with us that gift of presence means so much.”

Vouchers increase family involvement, enrollment at Catholic schools

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — Blending new students and their parents into the Catholic schools of Fort Wayne has become a welcomed benefit of the new Indiana School Choice program. Two principals are especially pleased with the results they have witnessed this school year.

Chuck Grimm, principal of St. Therese School in Fort Wayne, told Today’s Catholic: “The voucher program has really helped our school this year in the area of enrollment. We welcomed into our school community 32 new students who are now able to grow closer to God and obtain a Catholic education.”

Grimm said, “Without the voucher program, the parents of these children would not be able to afford a Catholic education for their children, which is something that they have desired for a long time.”

Grimm said the majority of the new families are Catholic but have never been able to enroll their children in Catholic schools.

He said now the parents have the opportunity to choose any of the Catholic schools within the diocese with the help of the voucher program.

“The addition of these new children has also helped with the diversity in our school,” Grimm said. “Our school community now has a better opportunity to learn about different cultures, while the new children have an opportunity to learn about our culture.”

Grimm said he feels blessed this year at St. Therese, “to have gained some really great students, in addition to our veteran students. They have fit in well. It’s just like they have been attending here their entire school career.”

“I am really proud of the way in which those students who have been attending here for many years have welcomed the new students into the fold,” Grimm said.

“I am also proud of our parents for making the new families feel welcomed and at home,” he added. “Many of the new parents have become very involved in school-related activities along side our veteran parents by volunteering their time, talent and treasure.”

The teachers too have welcomed the new students at St. Therese.

“I am also proud of the way my faculty and staff have reacted to having more students in their classrooms,” Grimm said. “It is exciting for them too, to be able to create new lessons and have more students engaged in classroom activities.”

At Bishop Luers High School, 58 new students and families have taken advantage of the vouchers.

“It is a joy for Bishop Luers High School to be able to reach more young people through the school voucher program,” Principal Mary Keefer said.

“Our teachers and staff truly believe that our school is a good place for young people to learn, to grow, to mature and to meet Jesus Christ,” she said.