**Today’s Catholic**

**Trust in God to help change society, pope says in Mexico’s heartland**

**BY FRANCIS X. ROCCA**

SILAO, Mexico (CNS) — Celebrating Mass in the Catholic heartland of Mexico, Pope Benedict XVI told a nation and a continent suffering from poverty, corruption and violence, to trust in God and the intercession of Mary to help them bring about a “more just and fraternal society.”

“When addressing the deeper dimension of personal and community life, human strategies will not suffice to save us,” the pope said in his homily during the outdoor Mass at Guanajuato Bicentennial Park March 25, the second full day of his second papal visit to Latin America.

“We must have recourse to the one who alone can give life in its fullness, because He is the essence of life and its author.”

Citing the responsorial psalm for the day’s Mass — “Create a clean heart in me, O God” — the pope said that evil can be overcome only through a divinely inspired change of the human heart.

The pope made note of the monument to Christ the King visible atop a nearby hill and observed that Christ’s “kingdom does not stand on the power of His armies subduing others through force or violence. It rests on a higher power that wins over hearts: the love of God that He brought into the world with His sacrifice and the truth to which He bore witness.”

That message was consistent with Pope Benedict’s frequently stated objections to strategies for social progress that blend Christian social doctrine with Marxism or other secular ideologies.

“The Church is not a political power, it is not a party,” the pope told reporters on his flight to Mexico March 23. “It is a moral reality, a moral power.”

In his Silao homily, the pope did not specifically address any of Latin America’s current social problems, but after praying the Angelus following the Mass, he recited a litany of ills plaguing Mexico and other countries in the region: “so many families are separated or forced to emigrate...so many are suffering due to poverty, corruption, domestic violence, drug trafficking, the crisis of values and increased crime.”

Speaking in the central Mexican state of Guanajuato, which was a stronghold of the 1920s Cristero Rebellion against an anti-clerical national regime, Pope Benedict recited the invocation that served as the Cristeros’ rallying cry: “Long live Christ the King and Mary of Guadalupe.”

**MEXICO, PAGE 3**

**Spiritual commitment within Marriage and family**

**BY KAREN CLIFFORD**

NOTRE DAME — Franciscan Father David Mary Engo explained to the audience at the Notre Dame Conference Center that marriage is not a 50-50 proposition. “God provides the beautiful holy sacrament of Matrimony so that we will have a place where one can love 100 percent, be received 100 percent, and receive the other person 100 percent.”

Father Engo was among the speakers at the second Marriage and Family Conference held at the Notre Dame Conference Center on March 24. Sponsored by the diocesan Office of Family Life, the conference included Morning Prayer, two plenary sessions and three workshop sessions of four topics each to choose for those attending.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades quoted a pastoral letter written by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops two years ago about the importance of the sacrament of Marriage.

“There is no greater love within a marriage and a family than for the spouses and children to lay down their lives for one another. This is the heart of the vocation of marriage, the heart of the call to become holy,” Bishop Rhoades explained.

He spoke about the need for growing virtue in marriage. “True happiness is a virtuous happiness, a blessed happiness,” Bishop Rhoades said. “Holiness, living in friendship with Christ, living with faith, hope and love, is what brings true happiness.”

“It involves an increasingly Christ-like love

**Marriage, Page 4**
Observing Holy Week with faith and devotion

IN TRUTH AND CHARITY

BY BISHOP KEVIN C. RHODES

Throughout the forty days of Lent, we have been preparing for Easter which is fast approaching. We prepare in a special way during Holy Week, when we remember the last days of Christ on earth. I invite you to make this week truly holy in your individual and family lives through more fervent prayer and participation in the beautiful liturgies of Holy Week.

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday. We begin the Mass of Palm Sunday with the commemoration of the solemn entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem. We carry the blessed palms and sing Hosanna like the great crowd that welcomed Jesus into the holy city. As the liturgy continues, we focus more on the Passion of the Lord which is the Gospel read on Palm Sunday. This is why Palm Sunday is also called Passion Sunday. This year we will hear Saint Mark’s account of the Passion. In your prayer, you may wish to use this Gospel (Mark 14:1-15:47) for your own meditation during Holy Week so as to enter more deeply into the mystery of our Lord’s Passion and Death.

On Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week, we will celebrate the Chrism Masses in our cathedrals in South Bend and Fort Wayne. I invite all to attend these beautiful liturgies during which we will bless the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens and consecrate the Holy Chrism. At these services, our priests will publicly renew their priestly promises. This Mass manifests our priests’ communion with me, their bishop. I hope that many will come to celebrate with us the gift of the priestly office, so that His priesthood would continue in communion with me, their bishop. I always find these days a special time to reflect on Our Lord’s agony in the garden of Gethsemane on that first Holy Thursday night.

On Good Friday, the Church meditates on the passion and death of Our Lord. This is the only day of the year when the celebration of Holy Mass is prohibited. It is a day of Penance in which we are obliged to observe the laws of abstinence and fasting. In the afternoon, the celebration of the Lord’s Passion takes place. It is composed of three parts: the Liturgy of the Word, the Adoration of the Cross, and Holy Consecration (which was consecrated the evening before). The Chants or the Reproaches sung during the Adoration of the Cross help us to enter into the mystery of Christ’s death on the cross, not only with our minds, but also in our hearts. Every Good Friday, we listen to the Passion according to the Gospel of John. Again, I recommend spending some quiet time in prayer reading and meditating upon the account of the Passion (John 18:1-19:42).

On Good Friday, we celebrate the Christian initiation of the adults who have been preparing to receive the new life of Christ and enter into His Body, the Church. After their Baptism, they will be confirmed and receive the Eucharist. Some parishes also have other devotions on Good Friday, such as the Way of the Cross and the Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord. We celebrate the Christian initiation of the adults who have been preparing to receive the new life of Christ and enter into His Body, the Church. After their Baptism, they will be confirmed and receive the first Holy Communion at the Easter Vigil.

Easter Sunday also with great solemnity. As we hear in the Collect of Easter Sunday Mass, on this day God, through His Only Begotten Son, conquered death and unlocked for us the path to eternity. We solemnly celebrate Easter for eight days: the Octave of Easter, ending with Divine Mercy Sunday, the Second Sunday of Easter. The Easter season continues for fifty days, until Pentecost Sunday.

As you look ahead to Holy Week, I invite you to plan to observe these days with faith and devotion. We have been preparing our hearts throughout Lent through penance and sacrifices. That penance continues during Holy Week. With the Sacred Paschal Triduum, we solemnly celebrate Our Lord, crucified, buried, and risen. May this truly be a holy time for all of us and for our families! May God bless you!
DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE – SOUTH BEND
903 South Clinton Street • Post Office Box 390
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801

Good Friday Collection
March 27, 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Gospel readings come to life in a special way as we gather to celebrate Holy Week. During our Lenten journey, we may well wonder what we would have done if we had been there on that first Palm Sunday? In the Garden of Gethsemane, would we have stayed awake? When Jesus was arrested and crucified, how would we have responded? What would we have done as followers of Christ in the Holy Land?

Today, Christians living in the Holy Land are called the “living stones” because they are descendants of those who first believed and lived the Christian faith. The challenges that Christians face in Holy Land every day make life there very difficult.

Each year, all Catholics are invited to support Christians in the Holy Land by making a donation to the Good Friday Collection. Keeping Christianity alive in the Holy Land is the urgent goal of the Church. We have an historical task to help the Christians there. All Christians are called to assist our brothers and sisters who now live in the land that was sanctified by the Lord’s life, death and resurrection. Today, schools and parishes are signs of peace and hope. Shrines in Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem and many other locations welcome Christian pilgrims. The church in the Holy Land provides housing and food for the poor.

This Good Friday our parishes will take up a special collection requested by Pope Benedict XVI. Please be as generous as your abundance allows. Holy Land Christians, along with all of the clergy and religious working there, deeply appreciate your help! May God bless you during this Holy Week!

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend

Americans urged to stand up for religious freedom

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE, SOUTH BEND — People of various faiths stood with Catholics in 134 rallies across the United States — including Fort Wayne and South Bend — on Friday, March 23, to protest the Health and Human Services mandate requiring all employer health plans to include abortion-inducing drugs. The mandate allows no moral or religious objections, and thus is an assault on religious freedom.

A letter from Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades was read at the South Bend rally by Father Jacob Runyon, parochial vicar of St. Matthew Cathedral, and at the Fort Wayne rally by Sean McBride, diocesan director of communications.

“I want to offer a word of thanks and encouragement for all those who gather today to demonstrate their commitment to the freedom of religion and to freedom of conscience,” Bishop Rhoades wrote. “While these are among the most cherished of freedoms in our country, they are today — almost unbelievably — under attack.

“The mandate stands, ‘almost all individuals will be forced to buy that coverage as a part of their policies,’ wrote the bishop.

“Just last week,” Bishop Rhoades continued, “the Obama administration decided that all colleges and universities — including those that are religiously affiliated — would be required to provide these so-called services to their students as well. This still unfolding mandate is an unprecedented attack on this liberty since it coerces religious institutions and citizens to pay for actions that violate our moral teachings and religious beliefs.”

He added, “Our Founding Fathers recognized the innate right to religious liberty when they enshrined this right as our first freedom in the Bill of Rights. The author of the First Amendment, James Madison, wrote: ‘Conscience is the most sacred of all property.’ Thomas Jefferson wrote: ‘No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of the civil authority.’”

Bishop Rhoades shared that the implication of the mandate for the Church and other religious groups in the United States are grave.

“In the coming months, we must focus our energies on fighting this unjust mandate and defending our religious liberty. I exhort everyone to be engaged on this issue. We rally,” said Bishop Rhoades.

In South Bend, Father Jacob Runyon, parochial vicar at St. Matthew Cathedral, reads the letter from Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

PUBLIC SCHEDULE OF BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

- Sunday, April 1, 11:30 a.m. — Palm Sunday Mass, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- Monday, April 2, 7:30 p.m. — Chrism Mass, Saint Matthew’s Cathedral, South Bend
- Tuesday, April 3, 7:30 p.m. — Chrism Mass, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- Thursday, April 5, 7:30 p.m. — Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord’s Supper, Saint Matthew’s Cathedral, South Bend
- Thursday, April 5, 11 p.m. — Tenebrae Service, Basilica of the Sacred Heart, University of Notre Dame
- Friday, April 6, 1 p.m. — Celebration of the Passion of the Lord, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- Saturday, April 7, 9 p.m. — Easter Vigil Mass, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- Sunday, April 8, 1 p.m. — Mass at Saint Joseph County Jail

MEXICO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

But reaffirming his message of nonviolence, the pope prayed that Mary’s influence would “promote fraternity, setting aside futile acts of revenge and banishing all divisive hatred.”

The presidential candidates from Mexico’s three main political parties attended the Mass, along with President Felipe Calderon and his family. The Vatican said 640,000 people attended the Mass. Some Mexicans took long trips just to see Pope Benedict on his first trip to the country since being elected in 2005.

The journey was not easy for many. Thousands of the faithful walked more than three miles from parking lots in the town of Silao, 220 miles northwest of Mexico City.

“Life is nothing too difficult,” quipped Jose Trinidad Borja, 81, a retired hardware store owner from Queretaro who boasts of having participated in the annual eight-day diocesan pilgrimage to the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City for 65 straight years.

An army of vendors hawked water, coffee and tamales along the route in addition to Vatican flags and photos of Pope Benedict and his predecessor, Blessed John Paul II, who, with his five visits became one of the most beloved figures in an officially secular country.

“With Benedict, I feel something indescribable,” said Guadalupe Nambo Gutierrez, a retired secretary from Guanajuato, who saw the pope in the colonial town March 24 and attended the Mass the following day.

Getting a ticket was another matter. Nambo won a raffle for some of the tickets the Archdiocese of Leon allotted toishop Kevin C. Rhoades as he walked to the Mass.

The previous evening, after a brief appearance before a crowd in Guanajuato’s main square, Pope Benedict privately greeted a group that included eight people who have lost relatives to violence, much of it drug-related, which has killed nearly 50,000 Mexicans over the last five years.

Addressing his remarks there particularly to local children, the pope called on “everyone to protect and care for children, so that nothing may extinguish their smile, but that they may live in peace and look to the future with confidence.”

On several previous international trips, Pope Benedict has met with local victims of clerical sex abuse, but no such meeting has been announced for this visit.

On March 24, sex abuse victims of the late Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, founder of the Legionaries of Christ, held a press conference to present a new book criticizing the Vatican’s failure to act against Father Maciel, whom Pope Benedict eventually disciplined and post-humously republished.

Contribution to this story was David Agren.
need to defend our cherished rights and resist violations of our first freedom,” Bishop Rhodes wrote. “We must hold firm, be courageous in this matter and be united in our defense of the religious liberty granted us by God and protected in our nation’s Constitution.

“We let us all commit ourselves to prayer and sacrifice so that truth and justice may prevail and religious liberty may be restored. Without God, we can do nothing. With God, nothing is impossible. May God guide us and strengthen us in these efforts!”

Several Catholic speakers and legislators, as well as Lutheran and Baptist Church representa-
tives spoke at the Fort Wayne rally hosted by the Allen County Right to Life.

After reading Bishop Rhodes’ letter, Sean McBride closed the rally speeches. He traced the history of American freedoms through the Greatest Generation and Hitler’s invasion of Poland.

“Our fathers and grandfathers took up arms to defend against these grave threats, the threats against life, liberty and their pursuits of happiness. My grandmother sent four sons off to war. By the grace of God, three returned to her. I wonder how my grandmother would look upon her dear nation today.”

McBride said, “Flash forward roughly 70 years. The fight has come to us. Who knew the threat would originate from the oval office and our own commander-in-chief; a man that took an oath before God and country. And I quote; ‘I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.’”

“I won’t call him a liar,” McBride said, “but I will offer it up for history to decide. But I can say this: that this administration is taking a sledgehammer to a cornerstone of our nation and it must be stopped!”

He quoted Ronald Reagan and said, “Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children’s children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.”

McBride asked those gathered at the rally, “What will our grand-
children say about us 75 years from now, as they tell their children what happened during these dark days? Now is not the time to stay comfortable! Now is not the time to clasp politely. Engage in the con-
versation. Make your voice heard! Make this cause a sacred, personal duty.”

McBride concluded, “And do not, do not, stand behind your pas-
tor, or your bishop. Stand in front of them!”

In South Bend, over 300 people filled downtown’s Jon R. Hunt Plaza, where they prayed quietly as several faith leaders asked for God’s blessings, and they applaud-
ed and cheered vigorously as other speakers exhorted them to resist the unjust HHS mandate.

Lisa Everett, co-director of the diocesan Office for Family Life, offered her perspective as a woman, a Catholic, a mother and someone employed by a religious organization. The mandate is “particularly galling,” she said, because “it flies in the face of the free exercise of religion guaranteed by our Constitution, . . . that includes the right to refuse to par-
ticipate in activities that one consid-
ers to be very wrong.”

Equal treatment under the law also is being flaunted by the man-
de. Everett said, given that the Obama administration has granted an exception from the entire health care reform law to the Amish and to Christian Care Ministry, but refuses to give a conscience exemption to Catholics. She suggested that the Obama administration has taken this stand because it believes contraception, sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs are preventative services that enhance the health and well-being of women, so women should get those services free.

“It is precisely because the Catholic Church in particular has a clear and consistent moral code which characterizes contraception, sterilization and abortion as criminal, that the administration wants to ‘stick it’ to the Church,” Everett said. The South Bend rally was orga-
nized by Tom Lubinga of the Stand up for Religious Freedom coalition.
Pope arrives in Cuba, calls for greater freedom, respect for rights

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI began his three days in Cuba with a call for greater freedom and human rights, including increased liberty for the Catholic Church to proclaim the Gospel and serve the Cuban people.

After flying from Mexico, the pope was greeted at the airport in Santiago de Cuba March 26 by President Raul Castro and a formal salute of 21 cannon blasts.

Crowds began arriving along the pope’s motorcade route at around 10 a.m. By 11:30 many of the streets in Santiago de Cuba were watered rivers.

At the arrival ceremony, the pope told the crowd, “I come to Cuba as a pilgrim of charity, to confirm my brothers and sisters in the faith and strengthen them in the hope which is born of the presence of God’s love in our lives.”

He said the visit in 1998 of Blessed John Paul II “left an indelible mark on the soul of all Cubans” and was “like a gentle breeze of fresh air, which gave new strength to the Church in Cuba.”

After the visit 14 years ago, the government began granting concessions for public processions, gave the Church some access to media, eased the process for visas for foreign Church personnel and helped restore some older Church buildings.

Pope Benedict told Castro that Blessed John Paul’s visit inaugurated “a new phase in the relationship in Cuba between Church and state in a new spirit of cooperation and trust,” but he also said, “many areas remain in which greater progress can and ought to be made, especially as regards the indispensable public contribution that religion is called to make in the life of society.”

The Vatican has long asked the Cuban government for the freedom to run schools, to build new church buildings, to provide spiritual assistance to prisoners and for Church institutions, especially Catholic charities, to be given full legal recognition.

Speaking of the hopes and aspirations of island people, the pope twice referred to “all Cubans, wherever they may be,” a reference that included Cuban exiles and emigrants.

He said he carried in his heart “their sufferings and their joys, their concerns and their noblest desires, those of the young and the elderly, of adolescents and children, of the sick and workers, of prisoners and their families, and of the poor and those in need.”

Pope Benedict acknowledged the economic difficulties experienced by the vast majority of Cubans and the fact that the situation has worsened because of the global financial crisis, which has had a negative impact on tourism, a key source of income and employment on the island.

At the papal visit press center in Havana March 26, Alexis Trujillo, Cuba’s vice minister of tourism, said the visit had marked a “crucial in the current culture, Father Lengerich stressed in addition to the roles of parents, grandparents also serve to influence children in their spiritual lives.

“Nobody really understands the power of grandparents, kids will listen to grandparents, but maybe not their own parents,” said Father Engo. “It is important as grandparents to take our grandchildren aside and begin to really educate them in the faith. You teach them to pray, you take them to church, you show them the way. Let them see in your living images of God.”

Father Engo also touched on the impact of suffering in marriage and the family. “One of the most awesome things about being Catholic is that we understand the power of suffering. We understand its dignity. The beautiful gift of suffering is that we enter into it with joy knowing that we are hanging on the cross with our Lord Jesus Christ,” he said.

Suzie Younger, a parishioner at St. Pius X, spoke at one of the morning workshop sessions entitled “Dealing with Infertility.” Younger shared with those in attendance about her and husband Dave’s journey through infertility for the past four years.

Younger explained that statistics show one in six couples struggle with infertility. The grief that accompanies infertility usually follows five stages that include denial and anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

Depression was one of the hardest stages of grieving during infertility for the Youngers. “In some ways infertility is like experiencing the death of a family member every month. It is not the death of someone who is living in flesh and blood; it is the death of someone who is living in hope,” Younger explained.

Biblical Scripture helped Younger deal with depression.

“Hannah and Elkanah in First Samuel taught me it was all right to cry. I think that tears are very holy. They are tears of surrender and abandonment to God saying I need You,” she said.

“Hannah learns when it becomes too hard to stand in the Lord’s presence and she kneels. The hours I spent before the tabernacle and the Blessed Sacrament showed me He is the author of life, He is the giver of strength, the providor of grace, the sustainer of hope and the Prince of Peace,” she emphasized.

“Love is 100 percent self gift. You can’t hold back anything of yourself or for yourself,” said Father Engo. The need to protect the family is crucial in the current culture, Father Engo stressed. In addition to the roles of parents, grandparents also serve to influence children in their spiritual lives.

“In the Song of Songs it says ‘Love is stronger than death.’ God is teaching us that if we want to become a father it will demand everything you have to give,” Father Lengerich added.

Father Lengerich noted that the body of marriage is not just at the end of time but the Resurrection begins now because Jesus is alive and He wants us now to experience the glory of life that is in store for us in heaven.

“In the Song of Songs it says ‘Love is stronger than death.’ God is teaching us that if we want to become a father it will demand everything you have to give,” Father Lengerich added.

For one’s spouse and one’s children,” Bishop Rhodes continued. “And a love for God above all else since He is the ultimate source of happiness in this life and in the life to come!”

In the first of the conference’s two plenary sessions, Father Bob Lengerich, pastor of St. Dominic Church in Bremen, spoke on the topic, “What the Theology of the Body Means for Marriage.” Father Lengerich noted that in any vocation a person chooses that there will be suffering.

“The good news of Christianity is suffering is not meaningless,” Father Lengerich stressed. He offered a moment of levity on the subject of suffering when he spoke of the four rings of marriage: an engagement ring, two wedding bands, and a “suffer ring,” which drew laughter from the audience.

Father Lengerich emphasized that the moment to embrace marriage begins now. “You,” she said.

“You,” she said.

Abandonment to God saying I need to experience the glory that is in the life to come!”

Sanskrit says love is like the song of Song shows that love is like the sustainer of hope and the Prince of Peace.

Blessed Sacrament showed me He is the author of life, He is the giver of strength, the providor of grace, the sustainer of hope and the Prince of Peace,” she emphasized.

CUBA, PAGE 6

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At Mass, pope recognizes Cubans’ struggles, calls freedom a necessity

BY FRANCIS X. ROCCA

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba (CNS) — Celebrating an outdoor Mass on his first day in Cuba, Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged the struggles of the country’s Catholics after half a century of communism and described human freedom as a necessity for both salvation and justice.

The pope spoke March 26 in Antonio Maceo Revolution Square, in Cuba’s second-largest city. He had arrived in the country a few hours earlier, spending three days in Mexico.

The Vatican had said the square would hold 200,000 people and it was full; several thousand also filled the Shrine of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, Cuba’s patroness, to protect them from the hot sun.

Before the pope arrived in the popemobile, the outdoor service on his first day in Cuba, the pope acknowledged the struggles of the country’s Catholics after half a century of communism.

The pope painted a dire picture of the world: "When God is set aside, the world becomes an inhospitable place for man," he said. "Apart from God, we are alienated from ourselves and are hurled into the void.

"Obedience to God is what opens the doors of the world to the truth, to salvation," the pope said. "Redemption is always this process of the lifting up of the human will to full communion with the divine will."

Taking his theme from the day’s liturgical feast of the Annunciation, when Mary learned that she would conceive and bear the Son of God, the pope emphasized that fulfillment of the divine plan involved Mary’s free acceptance of her role.

"Our God, coming into the world, wished to depend on the free consent of one of His creatures," Pope Benedict said. "It is touching to see how God not only respects human freedom: He almost seems to require it."

The most specific advice in the pope’s homily regarded a topic familiar to his listeners in the prosperous capitalist countries of Western Europe and North America: the sanctity of the “family founded on matrimony” as the “fundamental cell of society and an authentic domestic church.”

"You, dear husbands and wives, are called to be, especially for your children, a real and visible sign of the love of Christ for the Church," Pope Benedict said. "Cuba needs the witness of your fidelity, your unity, your capacity to welcome human life, especially that of the weakest and most needy."

According to the Center for Demographic Studies at the University of Havana, Cuba’s divorce rate has almost tripled in the past few decades, rising from 22 divorces per 100 marriages in 1970 to 64 in 2009. The country’s parliament is scheduled later this year to consider the legal recognition of same-sex marriage, in response to a campaign led by Martela Castro, daughter of President Raul Castro.

Despite his challenges to Cuban society, Pope Benedict concluded his homily by repeating an earlier call for patience with the Catholic Church’s policy of dialogue and cooperation with the communist regime, a process initiated by Blessed John Paul II during his 1998 visit to Cuba.

"May we accept with patience and faith whatever opposition may come," the pope said. "Armed with peace, forgiveness and understanding ... strive to build a renewed and open society, a better society, one more worthy of humanity, and which better reflects the goodness of God."

A 30-year-old woman in a baseball cap who identified herself only as Xichel told Catholic News Service she and about 100 others traveled about 165 miles from Carnaguary for the Mass, and she hoped to see the pope in Havana.

"May we accept with patience and faith whatever opposition may come," the pope said. "Armed with peace, forgiveness and understanding ... strive to build a renewed and open society, a better society, one more worthy of humanity, and which better reflects the goodness of God."

Some Cubans complained about the three-hour wait under the hot sun; temperatures were in the mid-80s. One lady fainted on a street corner, but no first aid stations were along the popemobile route.

One woman who identified herself only as Natalia said, "A three-hour wait for a 15-second gaze of him ... but it was worth it." Some people said they were assigned spots along the route; word was passed down to them through places of employment or their schools, etc. Most would not give their identities to reporters.

Manuel Correa, a projects engi- neer, acknowledged: "I’m an atheist and have been so for a long time. However, I respect all people’s beliefs. I’m here because this is history; it’s not every day that a pope comes to our country. I’m taking pictures for my grandchildren, so they can see that I was there when the pope came.”

Contributing to this story were Francis X. Rocca and Wallice de la Vega in Santiago de Cuba and Cindy Wooden in Havana.

The pope waves to the crowd as he arrives to celebrate Mass in Antonio Maceo Revolution Square in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, March 26. Celebrating the outdoor service on his first day in Cuba, the pope acknowledged the struggles of the country’s Catholics after half a century of communism.

Contributing to this story was Cindy Wooden in Havana.
REDEEMER RADIO TO BROADCAST HHS MANDATE INTERVIEWS

FORT WAYNE — The Department of Education at the University of Saint Francis is sponsoring a dance marathon Friday, March 30, from 6 p.m.-midnight in the Hutzell Sports Center gymnasium to raise funds for Mad Anthony’s Children’s Hope House.

Admission to the dance marathon is free. Participants are asked to raise $25 each in donations to be part of the evening of games, food and learning dances to perform at the end of the evening.

Mad Anthony’s Children’s Hope House provides overnight accommodations in a homelike, family-centered and supportive environment for families with children undergoing treatment in any Fort Wayne area hospital.

Run, Panther Run 5K run and walk slated April 14

SOUTH BEND — St. Anthony de Padua Catholic Church and School in South Bend will hold Run, Panther, Run on Saturday, April 14. The event will feature a 5K Run, a 5K and Stroller Walk along with a Dance Marathon. The event will begin at the large pavilion at Potawatomi Park, proceed south through Indiana University-South Bend, follow the St. Joseph River and return via the same route.

A post-race celebration will be held at the St. Anthony School Gym, 2310 E. Jefferson Blvd. The celebration will feature awards, food, refreshments, music and massages.

Registrations may be submitted at the school or parish office or mailed to St. Anthony de Padua School, 2310 E. Jefferson Blvd., South Bend, IN 46615. Participants are asked to raise donations on their behalf to be part of the evening of games, food and learning dances to perform at the end of the evening.

Correction

In the Tax Credit Scholarships information published in the March 25, 2012 issue of Today’s Catholic, the Tax Credit Scholarship amount should have been listed as $300.
Stations of the Cross across the globe

Praying the Stations of the Cross, also known as the Way of the Cross, is a traditional devotional practice that dates back to the 4th century in the Holy Land and is considered a spiritual pilgrimage centered on a series of pictures, prayers and meditations of the 14 events that occurred during Christ’s Passion and Death on Calvary.

Youth, young adult and adult religious and lay pilgrims who traveled with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades were deeply moved by the magnificence of the Stations of the Cross at Lourdes, France, during their pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011. The 15 stations, identified in several languages, weaved their way up a steep mountainous path of over 1,500 meters of wooded and rocky terrain, each with larger-than-life sized, brightly painted, cast iron figures. The hillside stations, with 115 figures in all, were constructed by Raffl of Paris between 1898 and 1911. These photos, taken on the pilgrimage, illustrate the reverent prayerfulness of the solemn figures of Christ’s Passion and Death and are accompanied here by personal reflections.

First Station:
Jesus is condemned to death.
You bore injustice with no complaint, Lord Jesus. Teach me meekness in all of life’s adversity.

Second Station:
Jesus accepts the cross.
Jesus, You took the cross upon Yourself for my sake. Strengthen me to carry my own cross faithfully for You.

Third Station:
Jesus falls the first time.
Teach me, Lord, to pick myself up when I sin and find my way back to You.

Fourth Station:
Jesus meets His mother.
Jesus, You honored Your mother with Your life. Be my inspiration to honor my family members, even the most difficult ones.

Fifth Station:
Simon of Cyrene carries the cross.
Teach me, Lord, to graciously accept blessings from others, even as I strive to help those in need.

Sixth Station:
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
Jesus, You left Your features on Veronica’s cloth as a legacy of love. Help me to imprint those same features on my good works.

Seventh Station:
Jesus falls the second time.
As I grow weary of life’s burdens, Lord, please be my strength and hope.

Eighth Station:
Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.
As You consoled those women, Lord, teach me to offer consolation to those in need.

Ninth Station:
Jesus falls the third time.
The burden of my sin causes You such pain Lord. Help me turn away from sin and repent.

Tenth Station:
Jesus is stripped of His garments.
As You were stripped naked, please clothe me with mercy that will restore my soul.

Eleventh Station:
Jesus is nailed to the cross.
Jesus, teach me to forgive my enemies as You forgave those who crucified You on Calvary.

Twelfth Station:
Jesus dies on the cross.
Jesus, teach me to die to self and live for You.

Thirteenth Station:
Jesus’ body is removed from the cross.
Make me worthy, Lord, to receive You into my heart as Your sorrowful mother received You into her arms.

Fourteenth Station:
Jesus is laid in the tomb and covered in incense.
Jesus, as I repent of my sins wash my heart clean so that You may live in me more fully.

Fifteenth Station:
The Resurrection of Jesus.
Jesus, open my eyes that I may recognize Your everlasting glory, today and everyday, as I strive to serve You more faithfully.

Although not traditionally part of the Stations, the Resurrection of Jesus is sometimes included as a 15th station, as on the hillside of Lourdes, France.
Catholicism has presence in new Parkview Regional Medical Center

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — The new sprawling nine-story, 430 bed, Parkview Regional Medical Center in Fort Wayne boosts its capacity to be reserved here at Parkview.

The Blessed Sacrament will be in reserve in the chapel where chaplains and visitors may pray. Mass will be celebrated in the chapel — which also offers kneeling benches — on Thursdays.

“The Holy Eucharist, the true bread from heaven, will begin to receive the Bread of life while here at Parkview.”

Although Parkview Regional Medical Center is a Methodist Hospital, the facility serves a large number of Catholic patients.

Rev. Ann Steiner-Lantz, the director of chaplaincy services at Parkview Regional Medical Center, told Today’s Catholic, “We are so excited to have this chapel and the commitment that Parkview has made to pastoral care and spiritual needs of our patients.”

“So many hospitals around the country, in downsizing, are eliminating chaplaincy departments,” she said. “And here, we’ve built this beautiful chapel. We have a beautiful office complex here in the core of the hospital.”

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades places the Eucharist in the tabernacle at the Catholic Blessed Sacrament Chapel in the newly-opened Parkview Regional Medical Center in Fort Wayne. Although the hospital is a Methodist Hospital, the Eucharist will be in reserve in the chapel for Catholic patients and visitors.

The work of bringing the Eucharist to the sick, the ministers of Holy Communion who are so dedicated to this holy ministry of bringing the Eucharist to the sick here at Parkview.

How important it is that they have the opportunity to receive the Bread of life while here at Parkview.”

BY MARK WEBER

FORT WAYNE — One of the innovations at the new Parkview Regional Medical Center is found in the emergency department waiting area and could be described as a non-medicalic moor.

Anxious visitors there may be calmed by viewing a large mural — which at first glance depicts a typical Indiana rural setting, but on closer inspection, reveals individual renderings combined to make “the big picture.”

Each of smaller pieces of the mural is one square foot of canvas with the colors and graphics composing the general picture but includes a subtly blended overprint, hand-painted, which actually is a separate piece of art.

Each small canvas honors an “Everyday Star” and in artistic imagery commemorates individuals, dead and alive, who have given of themselves to make the Fort Wayne community a better place.

By viewing an interactive kiosk, visitors see information on each Everyday Star and why he or she was selected.

There are 160 of these mosaic pieces, and combined, have been given the copyrighted title of Murosity; “a community-based art project reflecting generosity through a mosaic of images, that, when placed together, form a mural.”

Working with the Parkview Foundation, one of the lead artists heading up Murosity was Vicki Junk-Wright, a Bishop Dwenger graduate who now teaches fine art at Canterbury High School.

Junk-Wright painted the main scene of the mural before it was divided into the smaller squares. She was assisted by Santa Brink in planning Murosity. Other local artists Karen Moriarty, Teri Marquart, Penny French-Deal and Terry Ratliff served as art directors in the project. Each small canvas is about 40 workshops producing the 160 individual squares, which were painted by professional artists, high school students, Parkview employees and area celebrities.

Catholics are well represented among the Everyday Stars and include Mtg. William Lester, Father Tom O’Connor, Franciscan Sister M. Elise Kriss and Bishop John M. D’Arcy, bishop emeritus, and Bishop Rhoades after his installation as bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, as well as Brian MacMichael of the diocesan Office of Worship and Father Jason Freiburger from Bishop Rhoades’ office.

Although Rev. Lantz is a United Methodist minister, she has been adamant about the Blessed Sacrament Chapel because “I have so many Catholic friends, coworkers and so many Catholic patients — and to be able to pray in front of the reserved Eucharist is so important.”

Hospital ER visitors find healing through art

The lower photo depicts tribute to Father Tom O’Connor, showing a bowl of soup and the spires of St. Mary Catholic Church in Fort Wayne painted by Taylor Firestine, a graduate of Bishop Luers High School.

At top is the waiting room of the emergency department where the mural can be seen, and in the foreground is an interactive kiosk that visitors can touch to view individual squares about the artist and the “Everyday Star” portrayed.
Our team is part of your team.

Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center provides Certified Athletic Trainers to high schools in our community.

These licensed medical professionals are trained in the prevention, evaluation, treatment and rehabilitation of all types of athletic injuries. Our trainers are committed to keeping our local athletes healthy and safe.

So while you’re cheering in the stands, they’re sitting behind the bench – giving you peace of mind and keeping our young athletes in the game.

For more information call: 574.335.6214

Most Precious Blood Church

Easter Triduum

Thursday 7:00 PM Mass of the Lord’s Supper
(Adoration after Mass until 10:00 PM)
Friday - 1:30 PM Good Friday Liturgy & Communion
Saturday - 9:00 PM Easter Vigil Mass
Easter Sunday - 8:00 & 10:15 AM Masses
(REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE)

1515 Barthold Street • Fort Wayne

SCOUTS HOST FOOD COLLECTION FOR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

The six Girl Scout Troops at St. Thomas the Apostle School in Elkhart hosted a food and personal care item collection during Girl Scout Week, March 12-16. The food drive was planned to show their Catholic faith in action while honoring the values of Girl Scouting. The girls made signs, encouraged donations and helped to deliver more than 200 items to the Elkhart St. Vincent de Paul food pantry. Pictured, with the donations, are the more than 60 Girl Scouts at St. Thomas the Apostle School — Daisy Troop 00216, Daisy Troop 00217, Brownie Troop 10022, Brownie Troop 10411, Junior Troop 10061, Cadette Troop 10074.

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The people of St. Jude Catholic Church Randallia Drive at East State Blvd. in Fort Wayne invite all to join in the celebration of the Paschal Triduum

Holy Thursday, April 5 - 7:00 PM
Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper
Good Friday, April 6 - 12:30 PM
Celebration of the Lord’s Passion
Holy Saturday, April 7 - 9:00 PM
Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday, April 8
Masses - 7:00, 9:00 and 11:00 AM
Easter Egg Hunt - 4:45 PM
Contraception: What’s a Catholic to think?

Catholic apologist Christopher West relates a moving inci-
dent about his late father-in-
law, a man he never met but greatly admired. At Mass on the day after his wedding, having just consum-
minated his marriage the night before, his father-in-law was in tears after receiving the Eucharist. When his new bride inquired, he responded: “For the first time in my life I understood the meaning of Christ’s words, “This is my body, for you.”’’ This story is not only po-
gnant, it is profound, for it captures the true, beauty and goodness of the marital embrace as designed by God. As Blessed John Paul II expressed it: “Sexual love is an integ-
ment of the whole person — body, emotions and soul — and it mani-
fests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love.” — “Familiaris consortio,” 37.

Perhaps we can now understand on a deeper level that the question of family planning is not peripheral
to our faith. On the contrary, how we handle our mutual fertility in marriage is a central and serious issue in our walk with God. Every Sunday when we recite the Creed at Mass, we profess belief in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life. There is only one act that puts us in communion with God as the Lord and giver of life, and that is the matrimonial act.

How beautiful that He who is the bond of love between the Father and the Son should be the one who can make this bond for each other in marriage so real that it actually becomes another person, the two of us in one flesh. When it comes to marriage, sexuality and procreation, therefore, we are standing on holy ground. God is present here in a mysterious but real way, and like Moses who approached the burning bush on Mount Horeb, we remove the sands from our feet in profound reverence.

Only if we have a deep sense of the sacredness of sex, can we appreciate the descration that contraception and sterilization really are. We dehennis need to “violte the sanctity of” and when we use contraception or undergo a sterilization procedure, we have violated the sanctity of sex, even if we are not conscious of it. This desecration damages our relationship with God and with one another. But the beauty of the Christian life is that Christ came to redeem us from sin and to reconcile us in communion with God as the

Why and how to fast: A family’s guide

Have you heard?
March 30 was designated by our bishops to be as a day of fasting and prayer for religious freedom and conscience protection. If you are reading this after the fact, you can still designate your own day of fasting and prayer for this purpose. If you’re reading this before the date (Today’s Catholic is published just a bit ahead of the date on the website) there’s still time to join in prayer with everybody else.

Why, though? You ask. Why spend the time fasting and how?

Why fast?
The first reason to fast is because that is what God’s people have historically done after a decision, grave situation or problem before them. In the Old Testament, Queen Esther fasted before approaching her husband, the king, when she was going to reveal that Haman, the king’s advisor, had plans to annihilate the Jewish people. She said, “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go to see the king. If I must die, I must die.” — Esther 4:16.

After Esther and the Jewish people fasted for three days, Esther approached her king who was received well, and revealed the evil plot of Haman, securing life for her people. Other ancient people of faith also fasted. Mary, the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:36) and Daniel (Daniel 9:3) fasted, to name just a few. Holy people in the Old Testament knew the value of fasting.

Second, Jesus fasted. Matthew 4:1-2 tells us that before His public ministry Jesus went in to the desert: “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for 40 days and 40 nights.”

Third, when we fast, we elimi-
nate attachments to food and open
ourselves up spiritually to God. We empty ourselves of our desires for material things and become more open to hearing, obeying and loving God. We are also making preparation for sin and doing penance.

How to fast
Fasting can be absolute or par-
tial, meaning fasting on water alone, or juices and water, or bread and water, or simply from “extras” like desserts, meat and wine, or taking one regular meal and two smaller meals. One, I once heard someone suggest that the time one normally spends eating on a fasting day, he replaces with prayer — the most personal and spiritual meditation. This makes a lot of sense to me.

Jesus gave us guidelines for fast-
ing as well. “And when you fast, do not look down, like the hy-
crites, for they disfigure their faces, try to appear to men that their fasting may be seen by

men. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward.” — Matthew 6:16-18.

How to explain fasting to children
You know your child’s maturity level and understanding. You can simplify things, perhaps talk about how things that are sweet can be a temptation, and say that you are fast-
ing for our nation and freedom of religion, and for God’s protection over our country. Older children may be able to understand the exact political situation and you may want to explain that to them. Or you may not. Pray about it and discern the best path.

Should your children fast?
Children’s prayers are powerful and children should be encour-
aged to make a small fast of their own, perhaps of sweets or a favorite snack. Children’s bodies are different than adults and they have increased nutritional needs so the Church doesn’t require your young chil-
dren to fast like adults do even on Good Friday or Ash Wednesday. In fact, it is probably unwise for them to do so.

Young children are often more willing to sacrifice a lot, and parents should be encouraged to guide them wisely, perhaps suggesting a fast from dessert and or meat, something that will not negatively affect their health. All children can be encour-
gaged to fast from a favorite game or television program in lieu of sub-
stantial food.

Catholics, indeed people of all faith, are at a critical juncture in his-
tory. Our religious freedom is being threatened by secular government and like the faith-filled people of the Old and New Testaments, we must humble ourselves and pray, and fast. Second Chronicles 7:14 states: “If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

Amen.

Theresa A. Thomas

Theresa Thomas is the wife of
David and mother of nine chil-
dren. Watch for her newest book "Big Hearted Families" (Scepter) and read more on her blog: http://theraesthomas.wordpress.com/
Cardinal Dolan and the new evangelization

Over the 50 years since the convocation of the council, we have seen the Church move through the last stages of the counter-reformation and rediscover itself as a missionary enterprise. In some venues, this has meant a new discovery of the Gospel. In once-catechized lands, it has meant a re-evangelization that sets out from the shallow waters of institutional maintenance, and as such has been tried. But there is also no doubt that following the teaching of the Church has been found difficult and has not overflowed with His generosity.”

According to some statistics, about 80 percent of Catholics have used birth control at one time or another. As a Catholic who used birth control at one time, I realize that I am part of that statistic. But now I have completely changed my stance, and I want to share why. I no longer feel the need that artificial birth control did to my body and my marriage. What was important to me is that I came to this understanding with the help of the Church, but then found that the Church had it right all along.

When I was on the Pill, I could never find one of those opportunities that God gives us to grow in our trust in Him. Early in our married life, we accepted the Church’s invitation to tithe. God has never failed us as we professed our trust in Him in this area of our family finances. Putting our trust in God, He gave us the grace to use a form of contraception to allow the depth of relationship to be nourished between us and our children. But I wasn’t just tired of the physical side effects of contraception. I was tired of seeing the artifice of artificial contraception. I was tired of what it was doing to my marriage. You would think that since sexuality could be experienced only through the body, any sense of conception, that it would all be easier, stress-free and more loving. I THOUGHT it would be that way; but it wasn’t. It was denying potential and life. When you have several children already whom you love, you can’t help but think that you had the potential to take away our own. Why? Precisely because He thirsts for us, because He longs for union with us, and the only obstacle to that union is our sin — which in His eyes, then, becomes the most precious gift we can offer.

Come now, let us set things right, we hear the Lord say to His people through the prophet Isaiah. Could the controversy occasioned by the HHS mandate be, among other things, an opportunity to re-evaluate our own conduct in this troublesome area of conscience? I want to grant a complete pardon to the souls that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on the Feast of My Mercy,” the first Sunday after Easter, the Lord told His disciples, the young Polish nun to whom He confided the depths of His love and chose to invite every person. Let us not let this Lent go by without giving Him our sins and letting Him set things right.

Lisa Everett is the co-director of the Office of Family Life.

An open letter to Catholic women about contraception

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**Sports**

**DIOCESAN TEEN NAMED INDIANA MISS BASKETBALL** Jessica Rupright, a senior at Norwell High School in Ossian, was announced as 2012 Miss Indiana Basketball. The award is sponsored by the *Indianapolis Star*, and Rupright received 41 votes out of 206 media members and coaches. The award is the state’s top honor for a girls’ basketball player. Charlie Hall, director of the Indiana All-Star Games, gave Rupright the news on March 21. Rupright, a 6-foot-2 center, holds the school single-game record of 35 points. She also toppled a school record with 1,591 points and 728 rebounds. Rupright is a member of St. Aloysius Church in Yoder.

**Bishop Dwenger gymnastics team celebrates state win**

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — Born in the middle of the Poinsatte dozen, Karen Trahin, Janet Shipper and Rose Nix came out on top as they led their Bishop Dwenger Saints to the 2012 IHSAA state gymnastics championship on Saturday, March 17.

Sisters by birth, the three have been involved in gymnastics since they were little girls and coaching together for the past three decades. Between them, the Bishop Dwenger alums have built an impressive resume — 26 children, seven runner-ups and five state titles.

The three were honored along with their talented team at an all-school assembly on Wednesday afternoon, March 21, in the gymnasium. It had been six long years since the Saints brought home a title; but as promised, the coaches delivered on their long-standing tradition of Trahin-Shipper-Nix back flips to celebrate. However, three special guests — their high school sons — came out of nowhere to perform the duties instead, surprising the student body.

Many teams boast a “family atmosphere,” but for the Saints it is literally true with the sister coaching staff and four first cousins on the roster. Over the years, many daughters and nieces have competed at Bishop Dwenger for their aunts and mothers, and this year was no exception.

Brittany Trahin, one of just two seniors on the squad, is No. 6 of Karen’s eight children. Her second-place finish on the vault helped seal the deal for the Saints to edge Valparaiso 112.550 to 111.975.

“It was great to finally dethrone Valpo (which has won the last four years),” explained Trahin. “We have not won a title since 2006 when my sister was a senior,” she added.

Although still flying high from the weekend victory, Shipper was quick to recall the big picture and the added value of attending a Catholic high school, “Our girls are able to compete with their God-given talents for His greater honor and glory. We could even say the rosary together as a team the night before the meet in our hotel.”

An impressive video was presented to the tune of “We are the Champions” highlighting each event from twisting start to perfect finish landing at the state meet.

Finally, Bishop Dwenger High School Principal Jason Schiffli added his congratulations and pointed out not only the gymnasts’ superior athleticism, but their critical thinking process and ability to focus tuning everything out in crucial moments. “Pound for pound, we have the best in the state sitting here both in body and mind,” he summarized. Finally he thanked the coaches citing them as “precious commodities” at Bishop Dwenger.

Also honored while all students were gathered were the National champion cheerleader squad and the Future Business Leaders of America and their adviser of the year, Andrea Weadock. The assembly started and finished in Bishop Dwenger fashion with the playing of the school’s fight song by the pep band.
Youngpeter receives Father Tom O’Connor Light of Christ Award

BY VINCE LABARBERA

FORT WAYNE — Retired high-school administrator Leon A. Youngpeter received the 2012 Father Tom O’Connor Light of Christ Award at a ceremony on March 21 at St. Mary Catholic Church, Fort Wayne. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades presented Youngpeter with the prestigious award.

Sponsored by St. Mary Parish and the diocese, the award was created six years ago in memory of Father Thomas P. O’Connor, considered by many to be an icon of Catholic faith in action. Father Tom died on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17, 2004, after serving as pastor of St. Mary for more than 34 years.

In his remarks, Bishop Rhoades congratulated the four finalists and the recipient of this year’s Father Tom O’Connor Light of Christ Award.

“May God bless all of you … for your faith-filled service and your love of neighbor. That’s what this is all about,” he said.

“Thank you for your work,” Bishop Rhoades said. “Leon Youngpeter, by his work, has shown us his faith,” Bishop Rhoades remarked.

“This is what the Light of Christ Award is all about — it’s what Father Tom O’Connor was all about — faith and action, putting our faith into practice!”

Youngpeter, well-known in the community for his administrative and classroom expertise, was selected for his work outside the classroom “encouraging the next generation of Father Toms.”

For 24 years he managed the St. Mary’s Christmas Box distribution program, enlisting the help first of the Snider High School concert band and homerooms, and then expanding the youth involvement to include North Side High School’s Honors Program, Elmhurst High School, the Bishop Luers High School Key Club, South Side High School English classes, and the Wayne High School Tech program.

Youngpeter’s work with teens provided resources to increase the Christmas distribution program from serving 75 families initially to serve more than 1,000 families each year. And, it has given young people the opportunity to learn how to give of themselves to help others.

“I said I would never seek recognition for what I was doing for myself because I felt strongly that a commitment to help the poor and the needy in this community had to come directly from your heart and not because you wanted anyone out there to recognize what you were doing,” Youngpeter emphasized in his thank-you remarks.

The award carries with it a cash gift in the recipient’s name to the project or charity of his/her choice. At Youngpeter’s request, this year’s stipend will be divided between Miss Virginia’s Ministry House in Fort Wayne and Francis Mustapha’s school for girls and boys in Sierra Leone.

In a departure from past years, finalists for the 2012 award were recognized at the beginning of the ceremony and luncheon by Father Phillip A. Widmann, pastor of St. Mary. They included:

• Michael Floyd, a teacher at South Side High School, was nominated for providing unique volunteer student-learning opportunities through Windsong Pictures.
• Elizabeth Keen, school counselor at St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, was nominated for her work with the Owning Up and Rachel’s Challenge programs.
• Rev. Leonel and Sybel Pech were nominated for their work with Hispanic families in Fort Wayne through Hispanic Development, an English as a second language program, and for their advocacy on behalf of those learning to adapt to new lives in Fort Wayne.
• Michel Sturm, DDS, founder of Pathways, Inc., was nominated for his efforts among homeless teens aging out of most of the available social services.

According to Andrea S. Thomas, chairperson of the event, the Father Tom O’Connor Light of Christ Award is given annually to persons of faith in one of three categories: Peace and Justice, Diversity and Inclusiveness, and Education. In 2013 the committee will accept nominations for whose efforts promote Peace and Justice. Nominations are open to persons of all faiths.
What's Happening?

WHAT’S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send your announcement at least two weeks prior to the event. Mail to: Today’s Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or email: fhogan@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.

Formula for Life 5K announced
Fort Wayne — The Formula for Life 5K run/walk will be Sunday, April 15, at the University of Saint Francis. Registration fee - includes T-shirt, complimentary lunch, music and silent auction is $15. Proceeds benefit orphanages in Haiti. Contact Amy Obringer at aobringer@sf.edu for information.

Spring craft show
South Bend — Little Flower Parish will have a spring craft show Saturday, April 14, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Over 40 crafters, bake sale and food pantry drive. Call (574) 340-7555 or email Buddytyl@aol.com for information.

First Saturday devotions
The First Saturday Devotions on April 7, will be held at these locations: Fort Wayne, St. Charles — 8 a.m.; Sacred Heart — 7:30 a.m. (English Mass) and 11:30 a.m. (Latin Mass); Our Lady of the Angels Friary — 9 a.m.; Albion, Blessed Sacrament — 8 a.m.; Arcola, St. Patrick — 7:15 a.m.; Garrett, St. Joseph — 9 a.m.; New Haven, St. John — 6:55 a.m.; Monroeville, St. Rose — 8:10 a.m.; Warsaw, Sacred Heart — 8 a.m.; North Manchester, St. Robert — 8 a.m. Check the church bulletin for Mass times.

Dyngus Day celebration
Granger — Knights of Columbus Council 4263 will have a Dyngus Day celebration Monday, April 9, from 5-10 p.m. in the St. Pius X gym. Admission $10 for adults and $5 for children under 12. Children under 6 free. Dinner and entertainment by Will Smaka Band included.

Bake and rummage sale
South Bend — St. John the Baptist’s Altar and Rosary Society will have a bake and rummage sale Saturday, March 31, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, April 1, from 9 a.m. to noon. Sunday includes a $1 per bag sale.

Live chalk drawing
Fort Wayne — Mary Hilger will offer a live chalk drawing Good Friday, April 6, at 6 p.m. at Queen of Angels. Stations of the cross will follow at 7 p.m.

St. Adalbert Mass and dinner
South Bend — The friends of St. Adalbert School will celebrate 5 p.m. Mass followed by a potluck dinner in the school hall, 519 S. Olive St., Saturday, April 21. The Mass will feature a combined school/alumni choir and chime choir. For information contact Linda Cornett at (260) 637-6329 or SaintAdalbertAlumni@gmail.com.

Fish Fries

Fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 553 will have a fish fry Friday, April 6, 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.

Queen of Peace Parish will host the Knights of Columbus fish fry on Friday, March 30, from 5-7 p.m. Tickets are $7.50 presale ($8 at the door) or $5 for children 6 to 12. Drive-through available.

Knights plan fish fry
Fort Wayne — The Knights of Columbus Council 451, 601 Reed Rd., will have a fish fry on Friday, April 6, from 5-7:30 p.m. Tickets are $7 for adults and $3 for children 12 and under.

Knights of Columbus host fish fry
Plymouth — The Knights of Columbus Council 1975 will have a fish dinner on Friday, March 30, from 5-7 p.m. Tickets are $7.50 presale ($8 at the door) or $5 for children 6-12. Drive-through available.

Lenten fish fry
Fort Wayne — The Knights of Columbus Council 11276 will have a fish fry Friday, March 30, from 5-8 p.m. in the cafeteria at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, 10700 Aboite Center Rd. Tickets are $8 for adults, $6.50 for children 6-11 and children five or under eat free. Carry-out available at adult price.

Knights plan fish fry
Mishawaka — The Knights of Columbus Council 1878, 114 W. 1st St., has a fish fry every Friday during Lent from 5-7 p.m. Adults $8, children 12 and under $5.

Knights plan fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 15521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry on Friday, March 30 and April 6, from 5-7 p.m. Adults $8, children 5-12 $3. Chicken strips for $8 and shrimp for $8.50 will be available.

Principal, St. Michael School, Plymouth
Beginning July 1, 2012

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For more information, contact Rhonda Scher at the Catholic Schools Office at 260-422-4611 X3335.
Bishop visits Saint Joseph’s High School on feast day

BY LISA KOCHANOWSKI

SOUTH BEND — The feast of St. Joseph is a special occasion at Saint Joseph’s High School, but it took on an even deeper meaning this year. This was the last time a bishop would celebrate the Eucharist at the high school’s 1441 N. Michigan St. location. Students are expected to resume the 2012-13 academic year this fall in the new building on Notre Dame Avenue.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades celebrated Mass in the Alumni Gymnasium with over 800 students, parents, faculty and staff on March 19. Concelebriants included Father Terry Ceehan, Holy Cross Father Thomas Lemos and Father Daryl Ryblicki. Holy Cross Brother John Paige, president of Holy Cross College at Notre Dame, also assisted.

“Happy St. Joseph’s day,” was the greeting given by Bishop Rhoades at the beginning of the celebration. “I can’t think of a better place that I would want to be at today.”

At the beginning of Mass, Bishop Rhoades talked about the new construction project, specifically the new chapel. He discussed with the students some of the parts of the new structure that he helped design an area where some of his ideas stemmed.

“I think it will be one of the most beautiful chapels in the United States. I encourage you to stop in there and pray a lot,” Bishop Rhoades told the students.

Among other elements of the sanctuary, the bishop and other officials talked about the design of the sanctuary, the stained glass windows, the statues and the stained glass art that will be installed.

“Many liturgies have such strong traditions associated with them. However, as we move on to a new building we will take with us the spirit of all that we celebrate when we gather together for Mass. It is always a special day when the bishop visits and it will continue to be in the new building.”

Saint Joseph’s High School Student Minister Tami Goy holds dear the last Mass that he will celebrate before he steps down as his main celebrant for the last time on March 19. The Mass was bittersweet. It was a joyous one with Bishop Rhoades, Bishop Rhoades during his homily. "What's most important is doing God's will and following God's will," Bishop Rhoades told the students as they began to look at their own vocations in life. "Think of all the lessons you can learn from St. Luke’s Gospel. Always keep the will of God as your number one and the top priority of your life."

After Mass, Bishop Rhoades had the chance to visit several classrooms and speak with the students. In one of the theology classes he spoke to the students about prayer and how he personally prays.

Saint Joseph's High School campus minister Tami Goy holds dear memories of the past and hope for the future of the school. "The liturgical celebration with Bishop Rhoades on Monday was bittersweet. It was the last Mass that he will celebrate with us in this building," she said, adding, "It is difficult to leave a building in which we have celebrated so many liturgies and has such strong traditions associated with it. However, as we move on to a new building we will take with us the spirit of all that we celebrate when we gather together for Mass. It is always a special day when the bishop visits and it will continue to be in the new building."

"Saint Joseph’s High School is a Catholic school dedicated to transforming the students in heart and mind. Creating a family environment with a dedicated and highly professional staff, the school encourages all students to achieve success," Principal Richter continued.

She continued, “Our school community strives to inspire students to promote justice, seek knowledge and attain goals set at the beginning of their high school career. Committed to achieving excellence in academics, faith and service, Saint Joseph’s High School provides opportunities for students to share their passions in and out of the classroom and live their faith daily. Our students are exceptional young people who understand the importance of protecting the dignity of life and supporting the belief that God is active because God is love. May the mission of Saint Joe continue to be fulfilled, and may God’s work continue to sustain our faith community.”