FORT WAYNE — Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will ordain Deacon Benjamin Muhlenkamp and Deacon Jacob Meyer to the Priesthood on Saturday, May 26, at 11 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

Born in Wheaton, Ill., and now a resident of Niles, Mich., Meyer is the oldest of three children of Kurt and Julie Meyer. He attended Holy Cross School, South Bend, and is a graduate of Ball State University with a bachelor’s degree in human resource management. Originally, Meyer had intended to pursue a business career but told his parents prior to graduation he wanted to become a Catholic priest. He then began his theological studies at Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus, Ohio.

Bishop Rhoades solemnly recites the Prayer of Ordination over Christopher Lapp at his diaconate Mass of Ordination on May 12 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

FORT WAYNE — “With joy and thanksgiving, we have gathered to celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Christopher Lapp as he enters the Order of the Diaconate through the sacrament of Holy Orders,” Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades said as he opened his homily at the ordination Mass.

Bishop Rhoades ordained Christopher R. Lapp to the order of the diaconate on May 12 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. He will minister for a year as a deacon before his ordination to the Priesthood on June 1, 2013.

Bishop Rhoades spoke about the divine initiative, as spoken by the Lord to the Prophet Jeremiah: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.”

“Today, Chris makes that response,” Bishop Rhoades said. “With faith, he says ‘yes’ to the Lord’s call. He trusts in the Lord’s words to Jeremiah: ‘To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you.’ With confidence in the Lord and His grace, Chris comes forward to be consecrated for the Church’s ministry, to be ordained a deacon, a minister of Jesus Christ.”

Bishop Rhoades spoke of celibacy, which the deacon embraces. “The celibate life is a sacrifice and involves renunciation, yet it is also a means to embrace life fully. Compelled by the sincere love of Christ and living this state with total dedication, Chris will cling to Christ more easily with prayer and the Eucharist. He will give his body and blood to the Church in a loving and selfless manner.”

All three campuses of Mishawaka Catholic School — St. Monica, St. Joseph and St. Bavo — came together for “Faith Families” on Tuesday, May 8. The school prayed the living rosary and launched a balloon rosary.

HONORING OUR LADY IN MAY

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will ordain Deacon Benjamin Muhlenkamp and Deacon Jacob Meyer to the Priesthood on Saturday, May 26, at 11 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

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Defending the truth about marriage: A matter of justice

BY BISHOP KEVIN C. RHODES

Last week, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, called the recent comments of President Obama in support of the redefinition of marriage “deeply saddening.” The institution of marriage is the very cornerstone of our society. We must speak out against attempts to redefine marriage.

By its very nature, marriage is exclusively the union of a man and a woman. God is the author of marriage and He endowed marriage with certain essential attributes. Male-female complementarity is essential to marriage. Marriage has two fundamental ends or purposes: the good of the spouses and the procreation of children. It is inseparably both unitive and procreative. Same-sex unions cannot qualify as a marriage.

In 2009, we Bishops of the United States issued a pastoral letter entitled Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan. Given the movement to redefine marriage in our country to include same-sex unions, I have decided to use this column to share with you the purpose of that pastoral letter that deals with this issue. I think we explain well the reasons why the Church opposes so-called “same-sex marriages.”

“One of the most troubling developments in contemporary culture is the proposition that persons of the same sex can ‘marry.’ This proposal attempts to redefine the nature of marriage and the family and, as a result, harms both the intrinsic dignity of every human person and the common good of society.”

Marriage is a unique union, a relationship different from all others. It is the permanent bond between one man and one woman whose two-in-one-flesh communion of persons is an indispensable good at the heart of every family and every society. Same-sex unions are incapable of realizing this specific communion of persons. Therefore, attempting to redefine marriage to include such relationships empties the term of its meaning, for it excludes the essential complementarity between man and woman, treating sexual difference as if it were irrelevant to what marriage is.

Male-female complementarity is intrinsic to marriage. It is naturally ordered toward generic union and the generation of new life. Children are meant to be the gift of the permanent and exclusive union of a husband and a wife. A child is meant to have a mother and a father. The true nature of marriage, lived in openness to life, is a witness to the precious gift of the child and to the unique roles of a mother and father. Same-sex unions are incapable of such a witness. Consequently, making them equivalent to marriage disregards the very nature of marriage.

Jesus teaches that marriage is between a man and a woman. ‘Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator made them male and female… For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’ (Matthew 19:4-6).

By attempting to redefine marriage to include or be made analogous with homosexual partnerships, society is stating that the permanent union of husband and wife, the unique pattern of spousal and familial love, and the generation of new life are now only of relative importance rather than being fundamental to the existence and well-being of society as a whole.

Today, advocacy for the legal recognition of various same-sex relationships is often equated with non-discrimination, fairness, equality, and civil rights. However, it is not unjust to oppose legal recognition of same-sex unions, because marriage and same-sex unions are essentially different realities. The denial of the social and legal status of marriage to forms of cohabitation that are not and cannot be marital is not opposed to justice; on the contrary, justice requires it’ (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2003). To promote and protect marriage as the union of one man and one woman is itself a matter of justice. In fact, it would be a grave injustice if the state ignored the unique and proper place of husbands and wives, the place of mothers and fathers, and especially the rights of children, who deserve from society clear guidance as they grow to sexual maturity. Indeed, without this protection the state would, in effect, intentionally deprive children of the right to a mother and father.

The Church upholds the human dignity of homosexual persons, who are to ‘be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity’ (CCC 2358). She also encourages all persons to have chaste friendships. ‘Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one’s neighbor. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all’ (CCC 2347).

At the same time, the Church teaches that homosexual acts ‘are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved’ (CCC 2557).

Basic human rights must be afforded to all people. This can and should be done without sacrificing the bedrock of society that is marriage and the family and without violating the religious liberty of persons and institutions.

The legal recognition of same-sex unions poses a multifaceted threat to the very fabric of society, striking at the source from which society and culture come and which they are meant to serve. Such recognition affects all people, married and non-married: not only at the fundamental levels of the good of the spouses, the good of children, the intrinsic dignity of every human person, and the common good, but also at the levels of education, cultural imagination and influence, and religious freedom.”

For all the above reasons, we are indeed deeply saddened by President Obama’s support of the redefinition of marriage. We must pray and work for the promotion and protection of marriage. Doing so serves the true good of persons. Doing so serves the good of the future of our nation. I thank all who are working to defend, promote, and strengthen marriages. May we all work together to create a vibrant culture of marriage according to God’s plan for the good of humanity!
Civic commitment of Christians must respect beliefs of others, pope says

SANSEPOLCRO, Italy (CNS) — Celebrating the 1,000th anniversary of a town founded to be a model of Gospel peace and justice, Pope Benedict XVI said Christians today must find ways to infuse their cities and nations with Gospel values while welcoming and respecting people with other beliefs.

In his evening visit May 13 to Sansepolcro, named after the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, the pope urged the townspeople to use the anniversary to emulate Sts. Arcanus and Aegidius, who established the town after returning from Jerusalem.

The saints saw the town as a place where Christians could fulfill their vocation to build a society marked by peace through the practice of justice, he said.

"Today there is a particular need for the Church's service to the world to be expressed through enlightened lay faithful," involved in civil society "with a desire to serve that goes beyond their private interests and beyond partisan views," he said.

"The common good counts more than the good of the individual, and it's up to Christians to contribute to the birth of new public ethics," the pope said.

The challenge facing the people of Sansepolcro is to take the city's founding ideals as a Christian town and harmonize them with acceptance of others and "the incorporation of different cultures and sensibilities" as the population becomes more diverse, the pope told the townspeople huddled under umbrellas in a town square.

The pope had arrived in Sansepolcro in the midst of a rain storm that forced him to cancel a visit to La Verna, site of a Franciscan shrine marking the place where St. Francis of Assisi received the stigmata.

Pope Benedict had started the day in Arezzo, celebrating Mass in a park with an estimated 30,000 people, including Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti.

Tuscany was the birthplace and heart of the Italian Renaissance, a humanist movement that led to a flourishing of art, music and literature. Tuscans today, the pope said, have to ask themselves "what vision of the human person they are able to propose to new generations."

The Gospel calls Christians "to live God's love toward everyone" with solidarity, care for the weakest members of society and respect for the dignity of each person, he said.

"To be in solidarity with the poor is to recognize the plan of God the creator who has made everyone one family," the pope said.

Pope Benedict said giving witness to God's love by caring for the weakest must include defending human life from conception to natural death and protecting the family.

Deacon appointment announced

The Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following deacon appointment:

• Newly-ordained Deacon Christopher R. Lapp to summer diaconal ministry at St. Therese Parish, Fort Wayne.

Priest appointment announced

The Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following appointment, effective May 9, 2012:

• Rev. Peter Dee De to parochial vicar, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, with special ministry to the Burmese community of the Midwest.

Pentecost Collection for Seminarian Education, assists formation costs

FORT WAYNE — The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend continues to be blessed with an increase in the number of seminarists studying for the priesthood. At present, there are 26 seminarists, and Deacons Jacob Meyer and Ben Muhlenkamp will be ordained as priests May 26. The ordination of the two seminarists is a special blessing for the diocese and a result of the generosity of its people.

Mgr. Bernard Galic, vocations director for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, said, “This is an exciting time for the Church because interest in the priesthood is on the rise. It looks as though we could have as many as 30 seminarists for the upcoming fall semester, since we have 22 returning seminarists and eight applicants. This is a great blessing for our diocese.”

The increase of seminarists brings financial challenges as well. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades refers to this as a “happy problem.” To address this “happy problem” last year Bishop Rhoades instituted an annual collection on the solemnity of Pentecost. The Pentecost Collection for the Education of Seminarists is a special, annual second collection held each year on the weekend of the solemnity of Pentecost.

Harry Verhulst, secretary of stewardship and development, said, “The results of last year’s Pentecost Collection were incredible. Our diocese collected $250,000 in support of our seminarists. This was the largest annual second collection in the history of our diocese. We understand the importance of this effort, because we understand the importance of having good priests.”

Bishop Rhoades, in his letter to the faithful, said, “The Pentecost Collection for the Education of Seminarists is an investment in our pastoral, sacramental and spiritual service, because investment in our seminarists is an investment in the life of our parishes and the life of the Church.”

For further information and to make an online contribution, go to www.dioceسفw.org and click the Pentecost collection tab.

Deacon appointment announced

The Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has made the following deacon appointment:
Catholic leaders reject Obama’s support for same-sex marriage

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic leaders rejected President Barack Obama’s May 9 declaration in a television interview that “personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married.”

“President Obama’s words today are not surprising since they follow upon various actions already taken by his administration that erode or ignore the unique meaning of marriage,” said Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. bishops, in a May 9 statement.

“We cannot be silent in the face of words or actions that would undermine the institution of marriage, the very cornerstone of our society,” Cardinal Dolan added. “The people of this country, especially our children, deserve better.”

In December 2010, Obama said his views on same-sex marriage were “evolving” and that he “struggles with this,” adding he would continue thinking about the issue. An Associated Press story May 10 quoted Obama as saying he wanted to announce his support for such unions “in my own way, on my own terms” but acknowledged earlier remarks by Vice President Joe Biden prompted his announcement.

On May 6, Biden, a Catholic, said he was “absolutely comfortable” with same-sex couples marrying, adding they should get “the same exact rights” heterosexual married couples receive.

The Catholic Church upholds the sanctity of traditional marriage as being only between one man and one woman, and also teaches that any sexual activity outside of marriage is sinful.

“I pray for the president every day, and will continue to pray that he and his administration act justly to uphold and protect marriage as the union of one man and one woman,” Cardinal Dolan said. “May we all work to promote and protect marriage and by so doing serve the true good of all persons. In a May 9 statement, the Archdiocese of Washington said it ‘opposes the redefinition of marriage based on the clear understanding that the complementarity of man and woman is intrinsic to the meaning of marriage. The word ‘marriage’ describes the exclusive and lifelong union of one man and one woman open to generating and nurturing children. Other unions exist, but they are not marriage.’

In its statement, the archdiocese said it would “continue to strongly advocate for the federal government’s existing definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman,” adding it supports efforts undertaken by those who uphold the traditional meaning of marriage.”

One such effort is a petition drive in the state of Maryland to overturn a law passed earlier this year to allow same-sex marriage in the state. The archdiocese covers five Maryland counties in addition to the District of Columbia.

The Maryland Marriage Alliance said May 2 that a petition to put the law to a vote had collected more than 56,000 valid signatures are needed by June 30 to add the referendum to the November ballot, with half of Maryland’s valid signatures are needed by June 30 to add the referendum to the November ballot.

The archdiocese said May 2 that a petition to put the law to a vote had collected more than 56,000 valid signatures. Nearly 56,000 valid signatures are needed by June 30 to add the referendum to the November ballot, with half due May 31 to the Maryland State Board of Elections.

“For us in Maryland, the vote on marriage this November has nothing to do with politics,” said Mary Ellen Russell, executive director of the Maryland Catholic Conference, in a May 9 statement. “It will be a vote on the issue of marriage itself.”

She added, “The definition of marriage is not a matter of politics. It is a matter of values and the foundation of society and family.”

On May 8, North Carolina voters approved a constitutional amendment defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman by a 3-to-2 margin. According to an initial tally by the North Carolina State Board of Elections, 1,303,952 people — 61.05 percent — voted for the amendment while 831,788 people — 38.95 percent — voted against it.

The amendment read, “Marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this state.” It enshrines the definition of traditional marriage in the state constitution, elevating it from what has been state law since 1996.

Across the country the views of many Catholics, though, appear to be trending toward support of same-sex marriage.

A March poll conducted jointly by the Public Religion Research Institute and Religion News Service found overall Catholic support for same-sex marriage to be 59 percent, with 36 percent of Catholics opposed. Support by Americans overall is at 52 percent, with 44 percent opposed. Among white Catholics, 57 percent support same-sex marriage and 37 percent oppose it.

The demographic groups that showed majority opposition to same-sex marriage were respondents age 65 and up, white evangelicals, Republicans, African-Americans, and those with a high school education or less. In addition, pluralities of men and “minority Christian” affiliations said they were opposed.

According to polls conducted over the past five years by Gallup, ABC-The Washington Post, NBC-The Wall Street Journal, CNN-Opinion Research Center and the Pew Research Center, public support for same-sex marriage has risen from 40 percent in 2006 to majority support today.

BY MATT TATUM

U.S. President Barack Obama gestures during an interview with Robin Roberts of ABC’s “Good Morning America” at the White House May 9. During the interview Obama said he believes same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.

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Pope recognizes Hildegard as saint, advances causes of US bishop, nun

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Although she was never canonized, St. Hildegard of Bingen is to be added to the Catholic Church’s formal list of saints, and Catholics worldwide may celebrate her feast day with a Mass and special readings by order of Pope Benedict XVI.

The Vatican announced May 10 that the pope formalized the Church’s recognition of the 12th-century German Benedictine mystic, “inscribing her in the catalogue of saints.”

The same day, the pope advanced the sainthood causes of 19th-century U.S. Bishop Frederic Baraga of Marquette, Mich., and of Sister Miriam Teresa Demjanovich, a member of the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, N.J., who died in 1927.

The pope’s order regarding St. Hildegard recognizes her widespread fame of holiness and that Catholics have venerated her for centuries.

In a 2010 series of audience conferences, which were collected and published after her death as a book, “Greater Perfection.” She died in 1927 at the age of 26.

Sister Demjanovich was born in Bayonne, N.J., in 1901. After attending Bayonne public schools, she began studies at the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, graduating in 1923. Two years later, she entered the Sisters of Charity at Convent Station. She wrote a series of spiritual conferences, which were collected and published after her death as a book, “Greater Perfection.”

In St. Hildegard’s time, there were calls for radical reform of the Church to fight the problem of abuses made by the clergy, the pope had said. However, she “reproached demands to subvert the very nature of the Church” and reminded people that “a true renewal of the ecclesial community is not achieved so much with a change in the structures as much as with a sincere spirit of penitence.”

In addition, the pope noted, modern Catholics can learn from her “love for creation, her medicine, her poetry and music that is being recreated today.”

During a May 10 meeting with Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, Pope Benedict signed 17 decrees furthering the sainthood causes of dozens of individuals, including Bishop Baraga and Sister Demjanovich. The decrees for both of the U.S. candidates for canonization recognize that they heroically lived the Christian virtues and are “venerable.” Before they can be beatified, the Vatican must recognize that a miracle has occurred through their intercession.

Father Baraga was ordained a priest in Slovenia in 1823 but left for America in the early 1830s to serve among the Ojibwa and Ottawa in the Great Lakes region in the 19th century. He was named the first bishop of Upper Michigan in 1857. Pope Benedict XVI moved his cause for sainthood a step forward May 10 by signing a decree recognizing him as “venerable.”

Bishop Frederic Baraga is depicted in a portrait from the Diocese of Marquette. The Slovenian priest served among the Ojibwa and Ottawa in the Great Lakes region in the 19th century. He was named the first bishop of Upper Michigan in 1857.

Among the decrees there also were two recognizing miracles, paving the way for the beatifications of Capuchin Brother Thomas of Olera, Italy, who died in Austria in 1631, and of Italian Salesian Sister Maria Troncatti, a missionary who died in a plane crash in Ecuador in 1969 at the age of 86. She had served in South America for almost 50 years.

Other decrees recognized the martyrdom of: Odoardo Focherini, an Italian who died in a Nazi prison camp in 1944 after being arrested while helping Jews escape capture by the Nazis; 14 Franciscan friars killed in Prague in 1611; and 22 Spaniards killed during the Spanish civil war in the 1930s.
residents and security personnel gather at site of deadly explosion in damascus, syria

Vatican spokesman calls on nations to help Syria implement peace plan

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The international community must help bolster Syria’s fragile peace plan, which risks unraveling in the wake of one of the deadliest attacks in 14 months of uprisings and conflict, the Vatican spokesman said.

Fifty-five people were killed and more than 370 people injured after two suicide car bombs exploded near a military compound in Damascus during early morning rush hour May 10. The government blamed terrorists for the attack while the chief of the opposition Syrian National Council, Burhan Ghalioun, blamed the government for the bombings, saying it was a tactic to keep people indoors and not demonstrating against the regime.

Cardinal Francis George, head of the pastoral commission of the Roman Catholic Church’s Synod of Bishops, invited Syria’s Orthodox Church to join the Vatican’s pastoral commission in holding its disparate Catholic community together. In a May 11 homily by Pope Benedict XVI criticizes tolerance open defiance, he clearly in too strong a position to be pulled. “There’s no doubt he’s under strong pressure,” said Herman Wenski of Miami told CNS that although the pope was engaged in the discussions, “you can see he is not a young man any more. It must be a great sacrifice on his part to put up with us day after day.” The archbishop kicked off the Florida bishops’ group discussion with the pope by explaining “the challenge and the opportunity” of the state’s growth through people coming from other parts of the United States and, especially, through immigration from Latin America and the Caribbean.

He said the bishops also spoke to the pope about the need to strengthen Catholic families. Bishop Lynch told CNS that in his experience, even if the government offers “all kinds of assurances” about exemptions for religious communities, families unions, “if we give in on this one or blink on this one, which I don’t think theologically we could do, but even if we look at the reasons why or what could suddenly find ourselves” facing a situation in which the government says, “You’ve got to do it” or all government funding for Church programs would stop.

Traditionalist leader says group could divide over unity with Rome

MENZINGEN, Switzerland (CNS) — The leader of a breakaway group of traditionalist Catholics speaking unusually hopeful terms about a possible reconciliation with Rome, but acknowledged significant internal resistance to such a move, which he said might lead to the group splitting apart.

Bishop Bernard Fellay, superior general of the Society of St. Pius X, spoke to Catholic News Service May 11 at the society’s headquarters in Switzerland about the latest events in Rome in more than two years of efforts at reconciliation with the Vatican. The society effectively broke with Rome in 1988, when its founder, the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, ordained four bishops without the permission of Blessed John Paul II in a protest against modernizing changes that followed the Second Vatican Council of 1962-65.

In April the society responded to a “doctrinal preamble” stipulating the group’s assent to certain Church teachings, presumably including elements of the teaching of Vatican II, as a prerequisite for reconciliation. The Vatican has yet to respond, but the director of the Vatican press office initially described the latest position as a “step forward.” The society is hardly united behind its leader’s position, however. In April, according to a letter which surfaced on the Internet May 10, the society’s other three bishops warned Bishop Fellay that the Vatican’s apparent offer to establish the group as a personal prelature — a status currently held only by Opus Dei — constituted a “trap,” and urged him to say no.

“There are some discrepancies in the society,” Bishop Fellay told CNS. “I cannot exclude that there might be a split.”

Bishop Lynch says LCWR reform is not ‘Armageddon’ for group

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — While a Vatican investigation or demand for reform can feel like the end of the world to the group or institution involved, Bishop Robert N. Lynch of St. Petersburg, Fla., said his experience has been that such actions are not devastating and actually can be opportunities. Bishop Lynch spoke to Catholic News Service May 10 about his advice to U.S. religious women after the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith ordered a reform of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, an organization of superiors of most of the women’s orders in the United States.

Interviewed during his “ad limina” visit to the Vatican, the bishop would not comment on the discussions which the bishops of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina had with Vatican officials and Masses at the Vatican, but national in scope. Pope Benedict established the ad limina Jan. 1 in response to requests by Anglicans seeking to become Catholics. Parishies of the ordination will be fully Catholic while retaining elements of their Anglican heritage and traditions, including liturgical traditions. Msgr. Jeffrey N. Steenson, head of the ordination, welcomed Father Bergman’s arrival, calling it “a significant moment in the young history of the ordination. The inauguration of Father Bergman, and the reception of several Anglican communities across the United States and Canada over the past few months are tangible signs of Christ at work in this new undertaking,” he said.

The 41-year-old Father Bergman, ordained at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in 1997, had been serving for the past five years as chaplain to the 150-member St. Thomas More Anglican Use Society in Scranton. The group will become St. Thomas More Parish at St. Joseph Church and will be based in the former St. Joseph property starting in late August.

Austria’s pastoral Cardinal Schönborn works to hold his Church together

OXFORD, England (CNS) — When discontented Austrian priests mark the first anniversary of their “Call to Disobedience” in June, it will be the difficulties facing Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna in holding his disparate Catholic community together. In the 17 years since Cardinal Schönborn became the spiritual leader of the Vienna Archdiocese, he has had to face organized dissent from clergy and laity seeking several Church reforms including admitting women to the priesthood. Both supporters and critics agree the pope has responded with a pastoral spirit. “There’s no doubt he’s under strong pressure,” said Herman Bahr, treasurer of Austria’s Laity Institute, launched in 2001. “He’s also a kind and generous man, who’s in too strong a position to be pulled by either side. Although he can’t tolerate any defiance, he clearly favors change himself,” Bahr said.

Bahr’s comments came in reaction to an April 5 Holy Thursday homily which Bahr described as lacking “any criticism — without specifying the European country — a group of priests who issued a call to disobey certain aspects of Church teaching.” In Austria, there’s little doubt that the pope was referring to the “Initiative of Parish Priests.”
St. Pius X students bike to school

GRANGER — Students from St. Pius X Catholic School in Granger normally get a lift to school, but on Wednesday, May 9, they used their own wheels to get there. It was the school’s third annual Bike to School Day.

St. Pius students and their families met at 6:40 a.m. in the parking lot of Knollwood Country Club. There was a prayer before the ride began at 7 a.m. Msgr. William Schoorler, pastor of St. Pius X Catholic Church and an avid cyclist, offered the prayer and led the cavalcade to the main entrance of the school. Joining Msgr. Schoorler on the ride this year were Principal Elaine Holmes, Father Terry Coonan, pastoral vicar and seminarian Bill Meininger.

The ride from Knollwood to St. Pius was just over three miles. Bike helmets were mandatory for riders and parents or guardians accompanied their children. St. Joseph County Police were at all busy intersections between Knollwood and the school and Friends of Granger Paths (FGP) assisted cyclists along the way.

The cyclists arrived back at the school after 7:30 a.m. when the Harris Township Department firefighters in a fire truck greeted riders at the school’s main entrance.

“The purpose of the event is to raise awareness about reducing our carbon footprint, get our bodies moving and to show an imperative need for Granger to have paths, bike lanes or sidewalks,” said Bill Corbett, chair of St. Pius X Bike to School Day.

Catholic Youth Summer Camp needs volunteer staff

MILFORD — The second annual Catholic Youth Summer Camp will be held from July 22-27 at Camp Mack in Milford. The camp is co-sponsored by St. Jude Parish in South Bend, Sacred Heart Parish in Lakeville, and St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend.

Camp directors are Dave and Jan Torma, parishioners of St. Jude.

The camp will serve youth entering fourth, fifth and sixth grades with a theme based on Luke 5:1-11. Space is available for 100 campers. Camp fee is $350 with a sibling rate of $300 for additional campers. Camp fee is $350 with a sibling rate of $300 for additional campers. Camp fee is $350 with a sibling rate of $300 for additional campers.

Parishioners of Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Albion enjoyed a steak supper April 21 hosted by the Rosary Sodality Club. A baked goods and gift basket auction followed dinner with spirited bidding occurring over several items. The event raised funds to send Blessed Sacrament high school students to ND Vision, a weeklong summer conference on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. This year Blessed Sacrament will send 12 students to Notre Dame Vision.

Blessed Sacrament Dinner, Auction Funds ND Vision

ST. VINCENT STUDENTS PLANT VICTORY GARDEN AT FRANCISCAN CENTER

The St. Vincent de Paul American Heritage Girls were joined by the St. Vincent de Paul Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts on May 5 to plant a 2,000 square foot garden at The Franciscan Center’s new Jean Kelly building located at 1015 Maple Grove in Fort Wayne. The garden will serve the center’s clients with fresh produce and act as a meeting place for volunteers.

St. Vincent’s Leach wins essay contest

FORT WYANE — Marcus Leach is the winner of the 2012 Fifth-Grade Essay Contest for Indiana, sponsored by the Indiana Association of American Mothers. Inc. Leach is the son of Matthew and Pamela Leach of Fort Wayne and attends St. Vincent de Paul School. Second place was awarded to Isaac Dunifon, son of Renee Dunifon and Martin Dunifon of Fort Wayne. He is a student at St. John the Baptist School in Fort Wayne. The topic for the essay was “What My Mother Means To Me.”

Each year American Mothers, Inc. holds an essay contest, which is open to all fifth graders in the nation. The national winner was announced at the American Mothers, Inc. convention in Washington, D.C. May 5-6 — Madeline Charles of Utah. The state and national entries were judged by the University of Saint Francis English department. American Mothers, Inc. also sponsors the Mother of the Year Award, Young Mother of the Year Award, and Mother of Achievement Award.

Churches in the Diocese hold ‘Mornings of Reflections’

FORT WAYNE — Redeemer Radio, Catholic Radio, AM 1450, will broadcast the Ordination to Priesthood of Deacon Jacob Meyer and Deacon Ben Muhlenkamp on May 26 at 11 a.m., from the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

Redeemer Radio’s live coverage from the cathedral commences at 10:55 a.m. with Father Daryl Rybicki, Dr. Matthew Bunson and Sean McBride anchoring the broadcast. Coverage of the ordination will also be streamed on the internet at www.RedeemerRadio.com, and simulcast in the South Bend area on WHLY AM 1580.

Scout names added

The following Girl Scouts from St. Charles Borromeo who received the Family of God religious medal were not listed: Morgan Meyer, Sarah Walden and Ellie Mondock.
an undivided heart. Celibacy frees Christ more completely for the service of God and others,” Bishop Rhoades said.

Deacons are called to be servants of the liberating truth of the Gospel. “They are to be filled with the conviction and spirit of St. Paul who wrote to the Corinthians: ‘We do not preach ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for the sake of Jesus,” Bishop Rhoades said.

“Notice how Paul did not direct attention to himself as a savior figure, nor did he promote himself or his

own advantage,” Bishop Rhoades added. “He preached Jesus Christ as Lord and only preached himself as a slave for the sake of Jesus. These are strong words. To be a slave means to belong to someone else and to live one’s life in humble service. Chris, like St. Paul, knows that he belongs to someone else, to Jesus Christ.”

The humble, self-giving love those ordained are called to live is an imitation of Jesus who came “not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many,” Bishop Rhoades quoted.

He spoke of the heart of diaconal spirituality. “The service of the deacon in the Church is threefold: the ministry of the word, of the altar, and of charity,” Bishop Rhoades said. “These ministries are all interconnected. In preaching Jesus Christ as Lord, in serving at the altar and in serving God’s people with charity, the deacon is living the configuration to Christ the Servant that takes place in ordination.”

“You will teach and serve in a society and culture that desperately needs the liberating Truth of the Gospel. You will teach and serve the Gospel of life in a society where the culture of death continues to spread. May you be filled with zeal for the new evangelization,” Bishop Rhoades said.

I also encourage you to be close to the poor and needy, like the early deacon saints of the Church, remembering that the poor need not only our material help, but also the hope of the Gospel,” he added.

Bishop Rhoades also encouraged the candidate to be “a man of prayer who lives each day in communion and friendship with Jesus, embracing His Gospel as your daily rule of life.”

The Rite of Ordination itself is rich with meaning and symbolism. After the chanting of the Gospel, came the Election of the Candidate, whereby the candidate is formally chosen for ordination and becomes referred to as the elect. The candidate was presented to the bishop by Father Jacob Runyon, parochial vicar of St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend, and associate vocation director. Father Runyon testified to the candidate’s worthiness, after which Bishop Rhoades formally accepted Lapp to be ordained as deacon.

After the homily, the elect declared his intention to assume the responsibility of the office of deacon, and promised obedience and respect to Bishop Rhoades and his successors. During the Litany of Supplication, the candidate laid prostrate on the sanctuary floor of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception while the intercession of the Saints and Angels was invoked.

After the litany, Bishop Rhoades laid his hands on the head of the elect in accordance with the apostolic tradition. Then, with the elect kneeling and with hands outstretched, Bishop Rhoades solemnly recited the Prayer of Ordination.

The newly ordained was then invested with the stole and dalmatic — the proper liturgical attire of the diaconate. He was also handed the Book of the Gospels, symbolizing the task of the deacon to proclaim the Gospel in liturgical celebrations and to preach the faith of the Church in word and deed.

Bishop Rhoades then bestowed the traditional liturgical gesture known as the fraternal kiss of peace, and thereby welcomed the new deacon into their ministry. The other deacons present also welcomed the newly ordained.

After the diaconate ordination Mass, family and friends gathered to congratulate the newest deacon in the diocese. Deacon Lapp was rendered nearly speechless and said he was “overwhelmed.” His father Greg was equally overwhelmed with the ordination ceremony and said, “It was awesome! I was raised Catholic and love the Church and all the tradition.”

Deacon Lapp’s grandmother, Dorothy Van Auken was overjoyed to have witnessed her first diaconate ordination and said, “It was fabulous. I am so proud of Chris.”

Brother Josh added, “He’ll be great at it (being a priest) because he’s a great leader.”

Mom Juli spoke with a mother’s heart of the change she has witnessed in her son, “He’s still your kid, but he is much more devoted and holy.” Of her son’s future she said, “He is a leader and a servant.”

Kay Cozad contributed to this story.
Catholic school students donate gift to Elkhart student

BY JODI MAGELLANES

ELKHART — A friendship between one Mishawaka Catholic Schools teacher and her public school counterpart has enabled a physically handicapped student to swing through the air next to his classmates.

Sue Felix teaches first grade at Beardsley Elementary on Elkhart’s near east side. Her own children attend Mishawaka Catholic Schools, which is how she and Mishawaka Catholic Schools first-grade teacher Beth Whitfield first became acquainted.

Felix’s and Whitfield’s classes have corresponded with each other for several years as pen pals. Earlier this year Whitfield’s students even enjoyed a virtual visit from Felix’s. Whitfield said she also keeps Beardsley students in mind when the opportunity arises to act as Christ to others by way of school or classroom service projects.

In observance of Catholic Schools Week in January, Whitfield gave consideration to a new idea from Felix.

“She’s always said there’s a great need. She talked about it with students here, regarding how it’s different for kids there — how they don’t always have food at home, or enough clothes to wear when it’s cold,” Whitfield said. So, at first, Whitfield’s class discussed raising money to make blankets. But then the talk turned to one of Felix’s students, seven-year-old Brontavious Coleman, who has physical disabilities stemming from Dandy Walker Syndrome. Coleman has physical disabilities stemming from Dandy Walker Syndrome that keep him from walking and from playing on playground equipment with his classmates during recess.

The St. Bavo campus Mishawaka Catholic Schools first graders held a one-day “Change for Change” campaign during Catholic Schools Week and raised enough money for Beardsley to order a special swing that Coleman can be fastened into to swing on the school’s playground. Last month, they traveled to Beardsley to present the money and to meet their pen pals and Coleman.

“The Beardsley kids were just as glad as we were when I walked in with a big (cardboard) check,” Whitfield said. “That was nice for my kids to see, too.”

Mishawaka Catholic Schools’ St. Joseph and St. Monica campuses also chose recipients for their Catholic Schools Week charitable efforts. The third through fifth grade St. Joseph campus collected money for Chiarai House in South Bend, where out-of-home respite care for families caring for members with special needs is provided. The funds raised by the sixth through eighth grade St. Monica campus went, by popular vote, to the Ronald McDonald House, where home-away-from-home support for families of seriously ill children being treated at Indianapolis hospitals is provided.

“Fundamental to our Catholic Schools is the idea of service to community,” Principal Vickki Wojcik said. “We wanted our children to follow the role of Jesus in the world. Part of the hope is that they’ll realize they can make the world a better place.”

After spending time with Coleman and his classmates, Whitfield said her students are hoping for the opportunity to return to Beardsley now that the swing has come and will be installed soon. They’d like to see Coleman have the opportunity to trade in his wheelchair for some air under his feet.

Whitfield said the young man smiled a great deal during their visit, and thanked them for their gift. “He seemed so happy to have them there. Really, all the kids did,” she said.

Brentavious Coleman enjoys the new swing donated by Mishawaka Catholic students and installed recently at Beardsley Elementary School in Elkhart. Coleman has physical disabilities stemming from Dandy Walker Syndrome that keep him from walking and from playing on playground equipment with his classmates during recess.
Benjamin Muhlenkamp to be ordained into the priesthood

BY KAY COZAD

FORT WAYNE — Just a few years ago, Benjamin Muhlenkamp had big plans for his future — farming, marriage and children. But he now knows God had other plans for him. Deacon Ben Muhlenkamp is preparing for his ordination into the holy priesthood on May 26 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne after discerning his future as a priest the past six years at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio.

Born in Coldwater, Ohio, in 1982, the third of five children and only son of Gary and Mary Agnes Muhlenkamp, Deacon Muhlenkamp was raised on a dairy farm near Geneva where he learned the value of service. Growing up attending the rural St. Mary of the Presentation Parish in Geneva, Muhlenkamp was active as an altar server and attended catechism classes. But during his youth, he says, his relationship with Christ “didn’t make the top of the list.”

But God was relentless and later as a young adult, while earning his bachelor’s degree in organizational leadership and management at Indiana University-Purdue University in Fort Wayne, Muhlenkamp began in earnest to investigate the faith.

He says, “During this period of time I felt like I was Indiana Jones, discovering unknown secrets, and buried treasure. … I became excited about how beautiful my faith was.”

After attending a college-age retreat he found himself assisting with the youth ministry at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne, where his nascent devotion rose to the challenge.

As his prayer life expanded, the idea of a vocation came, says Deacon Muhlenkamp, “as I was serving the teens and praying for them in front of the Blessed Sacrament. I felt that I was being invited to the priesthood.”

So after much prayer and encouragement from several priests, he applied to seminary and entered Pontifical College Josephinum in 2006.

Of his formation there he says, “Seminary is the place that we go to fall in love with Jesus. There I was surrounded by men who were also striving to grow in holiness. The class of men that I was with really became close. We have spent many hours together every day these past years, in class, meals, studying and in prayer.”

His assignments as seminarian and later deacon took him to several parishes around the diocese including St. Pius X in Granger, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Vincent de Paul and St. John the Baptist, all in Fort Wayne.

With his interest in metal fabrication, carpentry and fixing farm machinery, Deacon Muhlenkamp’s skills were put to good use as he ministered at each parish he was assigned. He says, “I love the opportunities I get to work with my hands. … My dad always says that you can take the boy from the farm, but you can’t take the farm from the boy. I know that this is true for me.”

In addition to being of assistance to the pastor of each parish with maintenance issues, Deacon Muhlenkamp took the initiative to visit with families and make new friends. His personal and social involvement within the parish has endeared him to many. And following his ordination to the diaconate in May 2011 Deacon Muhlenkamp has served in a multitude of ways.

“At seminary once you become a deacon, you get a parish assignment, which is so nice. I love helping out at the parish, meeting people, baptizing babies, preparing couples for marriage. I even had the opportunity to form a small Christian community. I just love helping people see the beauty of our faith,” says the enthusiastic priest-to-be.

Deacon Muhlenkamp’s hope for his future as a diocesan priest? “I just look forward to praying the Mass, hearing Confessions and offering time for Eucharistic Exposition in the parish I get placed,” he says. “I also look forward to spending time with the priests of our diocese and learning from them. … I am amazed at what the Lord will do through these hands.”

The father and son worked daily as a team on the farm during Ben’s high school years.

Gary recalls, “We always had a close relationship. He’s my only son.” And it was that he says that fueled his hope that his son would one day run the farm.

“I thought he would be good at farming,” says Gary, adding, “But he must want it. He’s very independent and I let him do what he wanted to do.”

Mary Agnes agrees, adding that Ben is “tenacious,” another quality she knows will benefit him in his ministry.
Jacob Meyer offers reflections on the road to priesthood

BY KAREN CLIFFORD

FORT WAYNE — With his ordination to the priesthood set for May 26 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, Deacon Jacob Meyer recently shared his reflections of his spiritual journey with Today’s Catholic. Memories of travel, learning administrative duties of the clergy, ministering to the sick, sharing and witnessing with parishioners and youth groups, and moments of sadness and joy were among the milestones Deacon Meyer recalled as he prepared for his religious vocation.

Many of Deacon Meyer’s first experiences involved on his journey to the priesthood began with his home parish of St. Pius X. “Not all seminarians come from such vibrant parishes with such loving people and I realized that right when I got to seminary,” he said.

“Many of St. Pius’ parishioners don’t know that at one point in time I was praying about possibly going into a religious order rather than entering the diocesan priesthood, but it was my love for my parish that made God’s will evident for me that I was called to stay in the diocese. So in a very real way, because of their prayers and support, I am where I am today and so I would like to thank them!” Deacon Meyer explained.

He credits Msgr. Bill Schooler, pastor of St. Pius X, with teaching him all the various aspects of becoming a priest. “At the seminary, you learn how to do all the things a priest does, but a seminarian learns how to be a priest from another priest. Msgr. Bill has been my mentor now for six years and he taught me how to spend myself for the sake of the people entrusted to me. He has always gone out of his way to help me learn all about ministry to every type of person/situation, parish administration, and balanced life of service to the Church and healthy rest,” said Deacon Meyer.

During the summer breaks, Seminarian Meyer spent time at various parishes around the diocese. “I began at St. Jude Parish in Fort Wayne, which is set in a beautiful neighborhood and I loved it from the moment I arrived. The pastor, Father Shoemaker, and the parish staff taught me a lot about ministering to the grieving and how to plan funerals,” he recalled.

The following summer, Seminarian Meyer had the opportunity to work with parish youth. “I was assigned to St. Charles Parish in Fort Wayne. Father James (Kumbakkeel, parochial vicar) welcomed me and I had a wonderful summer of learning from these three great priests. I had a lot of fun that summer with Vacation Bible School, the youth group and learning from the parish staff doing Baptismal preparation.”

While at St. Charles Parish, Seminarian Meyer had an opportunity to work with Father Phil Widmann at the diocesan museum. “I have always loved history and Father Widmann and the museum have taught me a lot about our diocese. It has been a great honor to help preserve the historical artifacts of the diocese and I have continued helping in the museum to the present day,” said Deacon Meyer.

After being ordained a deacon last May, Meyer was assigned to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. “Father Jim Shafer and Father Drew Curry were so good in helping me learn about the parish and how it functions from the perspective of the ‘big picture.’ Father Jim has a great sense of catechesis and administration and I spent the summer learning from this experienced pastor how to administer a parish and feed the flock entrusted to us.”

A friendship with newly ordained Permanent Deacon Jim Kitchens also developed at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and Deacon Kitchens became a mentor in pastoral ministry for Meyer as well.

International travel was among Deacon Meyer’s important milestones on his journey to the priesthood. Travel to Mexico during one of his summer breaks is one of Deacon Meyer’s favorite memories and he recalls the experience with humor and affection.

“When the vocation director, Msgr. Bernard Galic, first called me to tell me I was going to Mexico, I was a little apprehensive because I knew I didn’t have enough Spanish to read the Taco Bell menu, but that was it,” laughs Deacon Meyer.

“When I arrived in Queretaro, Mexico, my host mother was talking a mile a minute and the only thing I knew to respond with was, ‘si, si, si.’ She quickly realized I had no clue what she was saying and we began a process of learning sign language that helped me not only eventually learn a little Spanish, but also become a part of the family there.”

World Youth Day in Spain in 2011 was also a great experience for Deacon Meyer. In addition to enjoying the many events, Meyer was selected to be one of the deacons of the Mass at the Love and Life Center, a large sports arena in Madrid. There he had the privilege of meeting Archbishop (now Cardinal) Timothy Dolan, who was the main celebrant.

As he looks forward to his ordination to the priesthood, Deacon Meyer offers some insight to others thinking about pursuing a religious vocation.

“Pray and spend time with our Lord, present in the Blessed Sacrament. Go to Confession regularly, and know that you cannot do this alone,” Deacon Meyer reflects.

He concludes by urging those who are considering a religious vocation to talk to a priest. “God calls everyone to a vocation, but no vocation is discovered in isolation. A priest is always involved. Know that there are a lot of people praying for you and that I will be praying for you.”

May 20, 2012

Today’s Catholic

Deacon Jacob Meyer reads the Gospel on Good Friday at St. Pius X Parish.

Deacon Meyer watches from far right as Msgr. Bill Schooler lights the Paschal candle at St. Pius X at the recent Easter Vigil.
The Muhlenkamps are proud of the choice their son has made and already rely on him for answers to any religious questions they have. “We ask him all kinds of questions. He’s got access to the answers now. The other children don’t call me anymore. They call Ben,” says Mary Agnes, adding, “It’s kind of humbling.”

Mary Agnes, who plays the organ at St. Mary Parish, continues, “You can say what kind of home it was, but he was called by the Lord.”

As Deacon Ben prepares for his ordination into the priesthood this month, his excited parents pray for their son. Gary walks to the church almost every day to lift his son in prayer. Their hope for their soon-to-be priest son, “What do you hope for all children? That they can stay on the straight road,” says Mary Agnes, adding that her dearest hope is, “that he be compassionate.”

Deacon Muhlenkamp’s four sisters are happy that their brother has found his calling as well. His oldest sister Denise is very excited about her brother’s ordination. She says, “I am just overwhelmed with joy thinking about my brother being a priest and could not be more proud of him. What Ben has that will make him a good priest is the desire to do the right thing and teach the truth, a love for people and Christ, and last, but not least, a solid prayer life. As children, our parents encouraged all of us to consider the religious life if that was what God was calling us to do. So once we were all adults, I wasn’t surprised at all when he shared with me that he felt called to the priesthood.”

Another Muhlenkamp sister, Maria agrees, saying, “Ben will be a great priest because he is committed to and passionate about the Catholic faith and he is a great leader who is on fire for God! … His vocation has already been a huge blessing and I am so excited for him.”

Father Cyril Fernandes, pastor of St. John the Baptist in Fort Wayne, says of Deacon Muhlenkamp, who served at the parish during his formation, “He has a lot of initiative and that is very important for a priest.”

During his stay at St. John’s Muhlenkamp visited families, assisted with maintenance projects and was very helpful, says Father Fernandes. But he adds, prayer life is also important for a priest and Deacon Muhlenkamp is steadfast with prayer. “You would see him in the chapel at night,” says Father Fernandes, who recalls having to encourage the young deacon to get rest so as to serve God’s people well. Father Fernandes believes that Deacon Muhlenkamp will be a good priest and says, “He puts prayer first. But he is very open and social. He relates to people very well.”

Mom Mary Agnes sums it up for all saying, “In prayers of grace he will be a servant of our Lord.”

May Our Blessed Mother continue to bestow blessings on our parish son Ben Muhlenkamp as he is ordained into the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Robert E. Judge, M.D.
Swiss City Medical Center - Berne
The Members of the Serra Club of Fort Wayne offer congratulations and prayerful best wishes to

BEN MUHLENKAMP

AND

JACOB MEYER

as they are ordained into the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Will clothe its priests with blessing;
Its faithful shall shout for joy.

Ps 132:16

The personnel in the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocesan Departments listed here, offer their sincere congratulations and pledge their continued prayers and assistance to

JACOB MEYER and BEN MUHLENKAMP

as they are ordained into the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

- Cathedral Books & Gifts
- The Diocesan Business Office
- The Office of Campus and Young Adult Ministry
- The Office of Catechesis
- Diocesan Purchasing Agency
- The Office of Communications/Today’s Catholic
- The Office of Stewardship and Development Office
- The Office of Diocesan Archives
- The Office of Family Life
- The Diocesan Office for Hispanic Ministry
- The Catholic Schools Office
- The Office of Spiritual Development/Evangelization
- The Marriage Tribunal
- The Office of Vocation
- The Office of Worship
- The Office of Youth Ministry
- Bishop’s Office
FORT WAYNE — Recollections of Deacon Jacob Meyer from family and diocesan clergy abound as he prepares for his upcoming ordination to the priesthood on Saturday, May 26, at 11 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

Stories of service, support, friendship, humor and witnessing the faith describe the journey of this remarkable young man.

Parents Kurt and Julie Meyer recall Jacob’s decision to enter into a religious vocation. “Jake told us about his decision to pursue the Catholic Priesthood a few weeks before his graduation from Ball State University, where he graduated in human resources and management. His father and I were thrilled and humbled at the news,” said Julie.

While initially considering a career in business, Deacon Meyer’s decision to enter the seminary was not a surprise to his parents.

Julie recalls, “It fits him perfectly. We know that God chooses the person and we feel blessed that he called Jake.”

Ellen, Deacon Meyer’s sister, remembered the emotion of Deacon Meyer’s ordination to the diaconate and how it reminded her of the feelings she had on her wedding day. “I felt it was truly a victory for our God that we participated in the sacrament of Marriage with our whole selves, completely understanding what God intended the sacrament to be, and I felt that for Jacob during and after his ordination,” said Ellen.

Both Ellen and her brother Ryan noted that Deacon Meyer’s faith encourage them to become active in the Catholic community. Deacon Meyer encouraged Ryan to become involved in the St. Pius X youth group. “Through the St. Pius X youth group I have helped so many wonderful people and have seen tragedy transformed into hope and community healing. This would have never happened,” he said.

Ellen remembers the impact that the seminary students Deacon Meyer would bring home during school break had with strengthening her faith. “The seminarians’ stories and advice helped me get through a really hard transitional time in my life where I needed the support of my family,” she remembered. “During that time the seminarians became a part of our family and they were the influence that convinced me to move forward in my life and in my faith.”

Diocesan clergy recall with affection the service, humor and witnessing of the faith that Deacon Meyer has brought to his vocation.

The priests, staff and parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Fort Wayne extend congratulations and prayerful best wishes to Jacob Meyer and Ben Muhlenkamp on the occasion of their ordination in the holy priesthood.

“The priests, staff and parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Fort Wayne extend congratulations and prayerful best wishes to Jacob Meyer and Ben Muhlenkamp on the occasion of their ordination in the holy priesthood.

The Meyer family, in back from left are Kurt Meyer (father) and Jacob Meyer. Bottom left are Ryan Meyer (brother), Julie Meyer (mother), and Ellen Meyer Scott (sister).

The people of St. Jude Parish, Fort Wayne congratulate Father Jacob Meyer on his ordination.

Sing praise, play music; proclaim all his wondrous deeds!
The cover story for Newsweek magazine during Holy Week, penned by political and cultural commentator Andrew Sullivan, concerns the “crisis” that is supposedly gripping Christianity. Weighed down by its preoccupation with doctrines and supernatural claims, which are incredibly popular to contemporary audiences, compromised by the corruption of its leadership, co-opted for base political ends, Christianity is verging, he argues, on the brink of collapse.

The solution Sullivan proposes is a reaffirmation of Christianity—a return to its roots and essential teachings. And here he invokes, as a sort of patron saint, Thomas Jefferson, who as a young man literally took a straight razor to the pages of the New Testament and literally took a straight razor to the pages of the New Testament and physically excised fragments of the Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were massively interested in the miracles and exorcisms of Jesus and they were positively obsessed with His dying and rising. The Gospels have been accurately characterized as “Passion Narratives with long introductions.”

The result of this Jeffersonian excision is Jesus the enlightened Jesus. The result of this Jeffersonian excision is Jesus the enlightened Jesus. The Jeffersonian proposal is a repristinizing of Christianity on the brink of collapse. By the corruption of its leadership, temporary audiences, compromised doctrines and supernatural claims, Christianity has been reduced to a sort of market commodity—good for a certain audience, compromised by its preoccupation with things that are not necessarily central to Christianity.

But once Jefferson took out his textual scalpel—having been associated with healing and with a particularly powerful sense of God; Rudolf Bultmann converted Jesus into a religious genius, Kant transformed Him into the general theology of the last 200 years.

And in the opening reading, from the page of the Gospel of Luke 24:1-12, we hear the Lord. Through the words of Luke, we hear the Lord. “Today the Church celebrates the Ascension of the Lord. This great event of the Ascension, so well described in the Scriptures, is a sign of the Lord’s divine identity as much as the Ascension, certainly as much as the miracles. The story, however, as reflected in Acts and in Mark, does not end with its reaffirmation of the place of Jesus as Son of God and Savior; visibly seen during the Lord’s public ministry in the Roman province of Palestine in the first century. For us Christians today, as for all Christians who have lived since the events recorded in these Scriptures, the story has critically strong personal implications. The Lord, crucified on Calvary, risen at Easter, is with you and me. He is in the world. He has been in the world, living, healing and saving for 2,000 years.

He lives through the Apostles and their successors. Through them, we meet the Lord. Jesus is Lord! He is God. He lives! Reflection

Today the Church celebrates the Ascension of the Lord. This great event of the Ascension, so well described in the Scriptures, is a sign of the Lord’s divine identity as much as the Ascension, certainly as much as the miracles. The story, however, as reflected in Acts and in Mark, does not end with its reaffirmation of the place of Jesus as Son of God and Savior; visibly seen during the Lord’s public ministry in the Roman province of Palestine in the first century. For us Christians today, as for all Christians who have lived since the events recorded in these Scriptures, the story has critically strong personal implications. The Lord, crucified on Calvary, risen at Easter, is with you and me. He is in the world. He has been in the world, living, healing and saving for 2,000 years.

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READINGS

Monday: Acts 19:1-8 Ps 68:2-6a,6b 7ab Jn 16:29-33
Tuesday: Acts 2017:27 Ps 68:10-11, 20-21 Jn 17:11-14a
Thursday: Acts 22:20-26 Ps 16:1a,7b-11 Jn 17:20-26

Venerable Bede

Born in Northumbria, in northern England, Bede was schooled at the Benedictine monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, where he spent the rest of his life as a monk and priest. “Study, teaching and writing have always been my delight,” he wrote. He penned extensive biblical and theological writings, but his fame came as a historian. His most valuable work was “Ecclesiastical History of the English People.” In 836, a church council at Aachen, Germany, called him the Venerable Bede and Pope Leo XIII declared him a doctor of the church in 1899.

Christina Capecchi

She is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn. She can be reached at www.ReaChristina.com.
Knights hear call to spirituality, evangelization

MICHAEL BLANKMAN

We have been given a rosary and we should use it. We need to defend our home and what comes into it. Knights need to involve the faith in our councils and our activities.

Father Engo mentioned the Faith, Family, and Fatherhood festival being planned by the Knights in the eastern half of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. It will be held Aug. 17-19 at Headwaters Park in downtown Fort Wayne.

Father Engo told the Knights and wives that it is time to rise from our comfortable lives. He spoke of the example of St. Thomas More who stayed strong and surrendered his office to defend truth.

On Sunday new officers were elected and will begin their term on July 1. Elected were state deputy, Lawrence Fluhr, from Corydon; state secretary, Scott Cunningham, from Carmel; state treasurer, Martin McCoy, Jr., from North Vernon; state chaplain, Paul Zielinski, from Pittsburg; and state warden, Gene Hum, from Tell City.

Michael Blankman is the communications director for the Indiana Knights.

BARRON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

Further, the earliest Christian texts that we have are the epistles of St. Paul, and in those epistles, St. Paul wrote to the communities he founded, there are but a tiny handful of references to the teaching of Jesus. What clearly preoccupied Paul was not the moral doctrine of Jesus, but the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. And in the evangelical preaching of the first disciples — preserved in the Acts of the Apostles — we find, not articulations of Jesus' ethical vision, but rather affirmations of the Resurrection.

St. Peter’s “you killed the author of life, but God raised Him from the dead, and to this we are witness” (Acts 3:15) is absolutely typical. And from this followed as a consequence the affirmation of the Lordship of Jesus. One of the commonest phrases in the writings of Paul is Iesous Kyrios (Jesus is Lord), which carried a very provocative connotation indeed. For a watchword of Paul was the term used to describe an imperial victory. The first Christian evangelist is saying, not so subtly, that the real good news hasn’t a thing to do with Caesar. Rather, it has to do with someone whom Caesar killed and whom God raised from the dead. And just to rub it in, he refers to this resurrected Lord as “Son of God.” Ever since the time of Augustus, “Son of God” was a title claimed by the Roman emperor. Not so, says Mark. The authentic Son of God is the one who is more powerful than Caesar.

Again and again, Sullivan says that he wants a Jesus who is “apologetic.” Quite right — and that’s just why the cultural and political leaders of the contemporary West will be perfectly at home with his proposal. A defanged, privatized, spiritual teacher poses little threat to the status quo. But the Son of God, crucified under Pontius Pilate and risen from the dead through the power of the Holy Spirit, is a permanent and very dangerous threat. That’s why it’s so hard for Christians to be comfortable with the Gospel. The beginning of the Gospel of Mark is a direct challenge to Rome. The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mk 1:1). “Good news” (evangelion in Mark’s Greek) was a term used to describe an imperial victory. The first Christian evangelist is saying, not so subtly, that the real good news hasn’t a thing to do with Caesar. Rather, it has to do with someone whom Caesar killed and whom God raised from the dead. And just to rub it in, he refers to this resurrected Lord as “Son of God.” Ever since the time of Augustus, “Son of God” was a title claimed by the Roman emperor. Not so, says Mark. The authentic Son of God is the one who is more powerful than Caesar.

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St. Vincent Lady Panthers win CYO soccer title

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) soccer league named their champions on May 4 at Kreager Park. St. Vincent de Paul School eighth graders won both the girls’ and the boys’ titles for 2012.

The Lady Panthers posted a 4-1 victory over St. Charles 8 to win it all.

Jen Pesa, who has coached the group for the past three years could not have been more proud of her team, “These girls were so fun to coach. They worked so hard and I was so proud of them. It has been amazing to watch their transformation.” As fifth graders, the group did not win a single game, but Pesa explained, “They trained in the off-season, joined leagues and attended camps over the years.”

The Panthers had a great start to their season beating, the always tough, St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth girls their first game, which Pesa felt was a huge confidence builder.

“We had never been able to beat them before,” she said.

From that point on, Pesa saw her team believing in themselves, “They set their minds to it (winning the CYO) and God gave them the spirit to do it.”

The Panther roster included 13 players whose strengths were perseverance, attitude and teamwork, according to Pesa.

St. Vincent finished league champs also with an 8-0-1 record. Their only tie came against a severance, attitude and teamwork, players whose strengths were perseverance, attitude and teamwork, according to Pesa.

St. Vincent welcomes new additions Amber Lancia, Karsyn Kitchen, Katie Owens and Emily Tippmann. “The girls have been working very hard to have another shot at the championship and have developed into a close and determined team,” explained Scoles.

St. Vincent de Paul eighth-grade girls soccer team are from left, in back, Coach Jeff Cicca, Emily Childers, Olivia Wyatt, Mikaela Fuller, Amy O’Daniel, Alexis Giotta, Chelsea Heise, Coach Jen Pesa. In front are Moriah Heath, Brittany Smetcalz, Kailyn Burns, Elizabeth Parent, Shannon Connolly, Amanda Smetcluzey and Lily Anderson.

The Panther roster included 13 players whose strengths were perseverance, attitude and teamwork, according to Pesa. Their only tie came against a tough team from St. Jude when they finished with just 10 players on the field. In the tournament, they received a bye as the top-seeded entry, then beat St. Vincent 7 in the semifinals before advancing to the championship game.

In junior varsity action, St. Jude and St. Vincent 6 squared off for the boys’ championship with the Eagles winning 1-0.

For the girls’ title, St. Vincent 6 beat St. Vincent 5 by a thrilling score of 3-2 in a battle between schoolmates both wearing the same green and white jerseys. The fifth graders trailed 1-0 at halftime and 2-0 midway through the second half but came charg- ing back to tie things up at the end of regulation. This forced not just one, but two five-minute overtimes, which still ended in a tie. So, the two Panther groups went five on five for a shoot out and still could not determine a winner. It was not until they put three more girls on the field that the sixth graders were finally declared the champions.

An exhausted fifth-grade coach, Fernando Ruiz, explained, “I have never heard so many Hail Marys being said!”

He added, “Even though we had never been able to beat them before,” she said.

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Cardinal Dolan covers wide range of topics on SiriusXM radio

BY BETH GRIFFIN

NEW YORK (CNS) — In a genial, live, two-hour national satellite radio broadcast May 8, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York sent his first Twitter message and fielded questions on issues ranging from his priesthood to his favorite foods and beverages.

Cardinal Dolan was featured in a Town Hall event on SiriusXM’s The Catholic Channel 129. Twenty invited listeners perched on stools in a small glass-enclosed studio at SiriusXM’s New York headquarters. They read their queries from prepared cards and responded appreciatively to the cardinal’s thoughtful responses.

The broadcast was moderated by Sirius XM personalities Father Jonathan Morris and Tim Farley. NBC’s “Today” co-host Matt Lauer, former Major League Baseball manager Joe Torre and Shirley Dolan, the cardinal’s mother, were “surprise guests.”

Cardinal Dolan said he aspires to be a saint. “I’m longing for it and trying my best. Great saints are just recovering sinners,” he quipped.

He cited St. Therese of Lisieux, or the “Little Flower,” who famously defined sainthood as doing ordinary things extraordinarily well. “For a cardinal, most of life is routine,” Cardinal Dolan said.

“We’re all called to be saints. I hope 50 years from now someone will remember something I said or did and be inspired,” Cardinal Dolan said.

The cardinal, who hosts a weekly talk show on the Catholic Channel, opened the Town Hall with a milkshake toast to the audience and the event was peppered with references to food and drink. Without hesitation, he described his favorite meal “meatloaf, mashed potatoes, no gravy, butter, a cold beer and cherry pie.” Budweiser is his favorite brand of beer and peach his preferred flavor for a stand-alone snack of pie and cold milk. He also described feigning indecision at a gelato stand to sample many flavors before ordering.

Cardinal Dolan said his guests at an imaginary dinner party would include St. Peter, the Roman emperor Constantine, Abraham Lincoln and Archbishop Fulton Sheen. He said he would ask how St. Peter “recovered so quickly from denying Jesus to being at his tomb” on Easter.

“The cardinal said Lincoln is ‘one of the holiest and wisest men I’ve ever read about’ and then laughedly acknowledged that Archbishop Sheen, a skilled broadcaster, ‘would probably dominate the conversation.’ Jesus, he said, is a presumed guest at the dinner, one whom he meets every day in the eucharistic meal.

Addressing priestly vocations, Cardinal Dolan said families and parishes should invite and encourage young men without pressuring them. He said he aspired to the priestly priesthood from an early age, but would likely have become a married father and history teacher if he was not ordained.

“This man who taught me history at the junior high school I attended, I happened to be his assistant,” Cardinal Dolan said.

“We’re not called to be bachelors. We’re called to be celibate, which means we have a deep longing for a wife and children but we have placed that under God’s domain. We then have a spiritual spousal relationship with the Church and a spiritual paternity with our people,” Cardinal Dolan said.

Cardinal Dolan said his faith was tested in 2000 when his young niece was diagnosed with bone cancer.

“I was never tempted to doubt God, but I was tempted to doubt that God knew what he was doing,” he said. Ultimately, he latched onto the Gospel question “Lord, to whom shall we go?” and called it as his prayer and part of his episcopal coat of arms. His niece is now a young adult.

When Lauer appeared in the studio, he reminisced with Cardinal Dolan about a moving 2011 visit they made to St. Peter’s Basilica after it was closed to the public for the day. Lauer described himself as “deeply spiritual, but not religious” and said he was raised by a Jewish father and a Christian mother.

Cardinal Dolan said, “I’d be married father and history teacher if I wasn’t ordained.”

“Pope Paul VI said a priest should want to be a husband and a father,” Cardinal Dolan said.

“We’re not called to be bachelors. A bachelor freely chooses not to be married. We’re called to be celibate, which means we have a deep longing for a wife and children but we have placed that under God’s domain. We then have a spiritual spousal relationship with the Church and a spiritual paternity with our people,” Cardinal Dolan said.

The cardinal had a rapid-fire exchange with Joe Torre, who called in to the program. Cardinal Dolan said he was raised by a Jewish mother. Cardinal Dolan said, “I’m one of my heroes, Joe. You take your faith seriously.”

The former baseball manager and the cardinal had a rapid-fire exchange worthy of late-night sports radio, including updates on former major leaguers Stan Musial, Whitey Herzog, Tony La Russa and Frank Torre, Joe’s brother.

Cardinal Dolan said there is an analogy between the Catholic Church and sports. “Strength in athletics and spiritual life are allied. The same traits that serve well on the field apply to spiritual life: team work, perseverance, grittiness and vigilance,” he said.

Diocesan bishops, like sports managers, have to “craft a team to fit the park,” Cardinal Dolan said.

Both have to assess the local situation and develop their personnel to meet the challenges and opportunities.

During the broadcast, the cardinal used an iPAD to send his first Tweet. With the handle @CardinalDolan, he wrote: “Hey everybody, It’s Timothy Cardinal Tebow. I mean Dolan. I’m on Twitter. And I’m live on Town Hall on SiriusXM’s The Catholic Channel 129.”

Cardinal Dolan Covers Wide Range of Topics on SiriusXM Radio 

By Beth Griffin
Class of ’67 plans reunion
Fort Wayne — The Central Catholic class of ’67 will have a reunion Saturday, July 14, from 6 p.m. to midnight at Coyote Creek, 4935 Hillegas Rd. Reservations needed by June 15 to Kathy Murphy Brockway at (260) 489-8486 or Denise Hart Kennedy at (260) 456-4335.

Class of ’72 plans reunion
Fort Wayne — Central Catholic class of 1972 will celebrate a 40th anniversary, Saturday, Sept. 15, with Mass at Most Holy Trinity at 4 p.m. and a party at Deer Park Pub, 1530 Precious Blood Church at 5 p.m. Sept. 15, with Mass at Most Holy Trinity will offer Vacation Bible School for children age 4-14 from June 4-8 at the church. Call (260) 347-4045 for questions or to register.

Knights plan spaghetti dinner
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 451, 601 Reed Rd., will have a spaghetti dinner on Friday, May 29, from 5-7:30 p.m. A light supper will be served. RSVP by calling (260) 435-3222.

Fort Wayne — Knights of Columbus Council 451 will have a carry-out only chicken dinner Saturday, May 19, from 5-7:30 p.m. Cost is $10 by pre-sale tickets only available after all Masses or by calling Kathy at (574) 287-1700.

Fort Wayne — Fort Wayne Catholic schools. Registration for football season tickets. $1 each or six for $5. Send to 1104 N. Elliot St., South Bend, IN 46628. Special Olympics.

Vacation Bible School
Kendallville — Immaculate Conception Parish will offer Vacation Bible School for children age 4-14 from June 4-8 at the church. Call (260) 347-4045 for questions or to register.

Knights plan spaghetti dinner
Fort Wayne — Knights of Columbus Council 451, 601 Reed Rd., will have a spaghetti dinner on Monday, May 21, from 5-6:30 p.m. All proceeds will benefit Special Olympics.

KNHH to host grief workshop
Fort Wayne — Visiting Nurse and Hospice Home, located at 5910 Homestead Rd. in Fort Wayne, will host a free grief workshop titled “Surviving a Death from Suicide,” that includes a conversation with family survivors, on Tuesday, May 29, from 5-7:30 p.m. A light supper will be served, RSVP by calling (260) 435-3222.

ND football season ticket raffle
South Bend — The St. Hedwig Holy Name Society is selling raffle tickets for two Notre Dame football season tickets. $1 each or six for $5. Send to 1104 N. Elliot St., South Bend, IN 46628.

Spring chicken dinner
South Bend — Our Lady of Hungary, 735 W. Calvert, will have a carry-out only chicken dinner Saturday, May 19, from 5-7 p.m. Cost is $10 by pre-sale tickets only available after all Masses or by calling Kathy at (574) 287-1700.

‘Aladdin Jr.’ to be presented
St. Therese Little Flower Theatre will present ‘Aladdin Jr.’ Friday, May 18 and Saturday, May 19, at 7 p.m. at the University of Saint Francis North Campus Auditorium. Tickets are $5 for students and $9 for adults. Call (260) 747-2343 for information. Tickets will be available at the door.

If you are interested in listing your event or have any questions, please contact Leanne Oddou Mensing at (260) 744-0012.
Above, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, center, poses with seminarians. At right, Deacon Christopher Lapp, center, poses with Bishop John M. D'Arcy, bishop emeritus, left, and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

Newly ordained Deacon Christopher Lapp third from right, poses with Bishop Rhoades and family.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades lays hands on Christopher Lapp in accordance with the apostolic tradition.

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