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Serving the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

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St. Joseph Parish celebrates with centennial Mass

BY VINCE LABARBERA

FORT WAYNE — On the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Fort Wayne, continued its centennial celebration with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades. Father Timothy A. Wrozek, pastor since August 2001, concelebrated the 6:30 p.m. Mass on May 1, along with Fathers Philip DeVolder, Adam Schmitt, William Sullivan and William Kummer.

“I am very happy to be with you today to celebrate this 100th anniversary Mass of your beloved parish,” Bishop Rhoades began. “We gather on your patronal feast day, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker … instituted by Pope Pius XII on May 1, 1955.”

Bishop Rhoades explained the communist world was celebrating May Day, claiming this day as their own, a day for laborers.

“The Church established this day as a Christian feast,” Bishop Rhoades said, “to highlight the true dignity of human labor in God’s creative plan. And how appropriate that the humble workman of Nazareth, Joseph the carpenter, was chosen by the Church as the one to highlight the dignity of workers.”

“We can imagine how, in his carpenter shop, Joseph patiently and lovingly taught his Son, our Lord Jesus, the skills of carpentry,” Bishop Rhoades said. “Certainly St. Joseph educated our Lord in the Jewish faith and the law of Moses, but in fulfilling his fatherly duties, he also taught him his trade, carpentry.”

BY KAY COZAD

Deffenbaugh assumes helm of Saint Anne Home

FORT WAYNE — Saint Anne Home and Retirement Community of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has experienced much positive growth and change throughout its 47-year history becoming “the benchmark for high quality healthcare in Fort Wayne.” This year is no different with the changing of the guard in the administration office. David Deffenbaugh has been named the new administrator as Mary Haverstick retires.

Deffenbaugh is no stranger to the senior healthcare field. With a degree in healthcare administration and a resume that includes holding assistant and executive administrative positions in four healthcare facilities, the most recent being administrator/CEO of Signature HealthCARE of Fort Wayne, he brings a plethora of skill, experience and dedication to the job.

Deffenbaugh feels his advancing career is a vocation that stems from the experiences of his childhood. “I spent a lot of time as a child with my grandparents. They were a very significant part of my upbringing,” he says. “I came to know many older adults through our church, many of whom left lasting impressions on me as I grew up. Being with them as they aged influenced my decision to work with older adults. I wanted to ensure that quality of life and dignity were preserved and protected. In addition, I wanted to make sure that families could ‘sleep well at night’ knowing their loved one was being taken care of.”
Bishop announces Marian consecration on August 15th

By Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

I am happy to announce that, on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I will be renewing the consecration of our diocese to our Blessed Mother. On August 15th, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, I will renew our consecration to Jesus through Mary at the end of the 6:00 PM Mass. Mass will be followed by a Marian procession from the cathedral to Headwaters Park, organized by the Knights of Columbus, to begin the annual summer Festival of Faith.

I am inviting all to participate in this consecration by making a personal consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This consecration has a rich tradition in the Church. Saint Louis Marie de Montfort proposed consecration to Christ through the hands of Mary as an effective means for Christians to live faithfully their baptismal commitments.

I am proposing that all who desire to make this consecration follow the 33 days of preparation for the consecration. We will be promoting the excellent guidebook, written by Father Michael Gaitley, entitled 33 Days to Morning Glory. Father Gaitley is speaking to our priests this week about this program for Marian consecration. The 33 Days of preparation include prayers and meditations for each day, using the writings of St. Louis Marie de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and Saint John Paul II.

I see this consecration as a wonderful opportunity of spiritual renewal for all of us individually as well as for our parishes and diocese. It is an opportunity to draw closer to Christ through the one who cooperated fully in the work of salvation He accomplished. His Mother. She accompanies each of us and the whole Church on our journey of faith.

Mary assisted the Church at the very beginning when she devoted herself to prayer in the midst of the apostles in the upper room, awaiting the day of Pentecost. She assists us today with her prayers of intercession.

Pope Francis, like his predecessors, has a deep devotion to Mary. I had never heard of one particular devotion to Mary until I read of it as a personal devotion of Pope Francis. It is the devotion to Mary, Undoer of Knots. This devotion is traced back to the year 1615 in Germany. Pope Francis, when he was Archbishop of Buenos Aires, had copies of the painting of Our Lady, Undoer of Knots displayed in churches and chapels throughout the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires.

The Second Vatican Council taught that Mary’s faith unites the knot of sin. This teaching heartens back to the words of a second century Apostolic Father, Saint Irenaeus, who wrote: the knot of Eve’s disobedience was untied by the obedience of Mary; what the virgin Eve bound by her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith.

The knots of sin, disobedience, and unbelief take away our peace and serenity. Pope Francis says that these knots “are dangerous, since many knots can form a tangle that gets more and more painful and difficult to undo. But we know one thing: nothing is impossible for God’s mercy! Even the most tangled knots are loosened by His grace. And Mary, whose ‘yes’ opened the door for God to undo the knot of the ancient disobedience, is the Mother who patiently and lovingly brings us to God, so that He can untangle the knots of our soul by His fatherly mercy.” Mary always leads us by the hand as our Mother to the embrace of our Father and to His mercy.

I am encouraging the Marian consecration so that we will allow Mary to take us by the hand in our journey of faith, to help us to untangle the knots in our life. Her intercession and example help us to grow in discipleship and to bring Jesus and His Gospel to others.

In entrusting our diocese to the Blessed Virgin Mary, I want to implore her maternal intercession for our diocese and for all our efforts in the new evangelization. I will invoke her intercession that we may truly be a missionary Church that reaches out to others, especially to the poor and needy, the estranged and forgotten, the sick and the suffering, and those who have drifted away from the Church. With Mary, we can advance confidently in our holy mission.

You will be hearing more about the preparations for the Marian consecration on August 15th, especially about the 33 days of preparation. It is being organized and coordinated by our Diocesan Secretariat of Evangelization and Special Ministries.

In this month of May, traditionally devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, let us honor Our Lady with prayerful devotion. Jesus has given us His Mother as our Mother. She offers us her maternal comfort and love, as she said to Saint Juan Diego: Let your heart not be troubled... Am I not here, who am your Mother?
Fight the blues with the Eucharist and Gospel, Pope Francis says

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Receive Communion every Sunday and read the Gospel every day to keep discouragement and the blues away, Pope Francis said.

“The word of God and the Eucharist always fill us with joy!” the pope said in his address to people gathered in St. Peter’s Square May 4 to pray the “Regina Coeli” with him.

The pope spoke about the day’s reading from the Gospel of St. Luke (24:13-35), in which two of Jesus’ disciples left Jerusalem, saddened and dejected by Christ’s death.

Failing to grasp the truth of the prophets, the despairing disciples did not recognize the risen Christ when He appeared before them on the road to the village of Emmaus.

However, when Jesus explained the Scriptures, and blessed and broke bread with them, “their eyes were opened” and their hearts started “burning” with joy and hope.

“Life sometimes hurts us and we go there, toward our ‘Emmaus,’ feeling sad with our backs to God’s plan,” the pope said.

But when people open themselves to the word of God, “Jesus explains the Scriptures to us and rekindles the warmth of faith and hope in our hearts, and, in Communion, He gives us strength,” the pope said.

“Be sure to remember this: Read a passage of the Gospel every day and go to Communion every Sunday to receive Jesus,” he said. “Don’t forget! When you are sad, pick up the word of God. When you’re feeling down, pick up the word of God and go to Sunday Mass to take Communion, to participate in the mystery of Jesus.”

The word of God is always there to give direction and guidance “after our lapses” and Christ is always present in the Eucharist “to help us go forward on our journey,” despite the fatigue and let-downs in life, he said.

Earlier in the day, the pope focused on the same Gospel reading in his homily during a Mass of thanksgiving for the canonization of St. John Paul.

Speaking to Rome’s Polish community at the parish of St. Stanislaus, the pope said St. John Paul never lost hope or faith because his eyes were always fixed on God.

“It’s true that everyone is a pilgrim on earth. Pope Francis said, but there is a difference between being a traveler heading toward a precise place with a trustworthy guide and an errant wanderer who lacks purpose and direction.”

“The Polish people know well that to enter into God’s glory you need to experience the passion and the cross,” Pope Francis said. St. John Paul followed this path “in an exemplary way” so that “his flesh, too, dwells in hope.”

He said Christians become witnesses of hope when they encounter the risen Christ, who travels all roads in an effort to meet people on their journeys.

“Jesus is the risen traveler who walks with Jesus. Jesus is here today, he is here among us. He is here in His word, He is here on the altar. He walks with us,” the pope said.

When Christian’s hearts are weighed down by the world of God and their faith and hope are strengthened by the Eucharist, “they can walk the road to the village of Emmaus,” Pope Francis said.

“Don’t forget! When you are sad, pick up the word of God. When you’re feeling down, pick up the word of God and go to Sunday Mass to take Communion, to participate in the mystery of Jesus.”

The pope then offered a prayer of thanksgiving to Christ and the Holy Spirit.

He asked the Holy Spirit to move in people’s lives so that they “can act as creations of God,” he says.

“They need to experience the passion and the cross, the fire of the Eucharist, they can walk the road to the village of Emmaus,” Pope Francis said.

The pope ended his address with a request for the prayers of the Polish community.

“In this beautiful country, this beautiful land, I have the duty to ask for your prayers,” he said.

“I hope that I will be able to continue to convey the message of hope and love that Jesus brings to us all.”

The Mass was attended by several thousand people from Poland, who gathered outside St. Peter’s Basilica to watch the pope’s address.

The Mass was also broadcast on EWTN and other Catholic media outlets.

The event was part of the pope’s visit to Poland, where he is expected to draw hundreds of thousands of pilgrims.

The pope is scheduled to arrive in Poland on May 19 and will spend four days in the country, where he is expected to deliver a major address on the future of Europe and the role of the Catholic Church in shaping its destiny.

The pope’s visit is seen as an opportunity to strengthen ties between the Vatican and the Polish Church, as well as to address the issue of the Church’s role in the country’s turbulent history, including the Second World War and the communist era.

On May 19, the pope is expected to address a joint session of the Polish Parliament, where he is expected to deliver a message of peace and reconciliation.

The pope’s visit is also expected to boost the country’s tourism industry, as it is estimated that more than a million people will travel to Poland to see the pope.

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Bishop encourages confirmandi to be courageous and live the faith

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

GRANGER — “The Church needs your energy and enthusiasm to bear witness to Christ!” Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades passionately emphasized these words of mission to the seventh-and-eighth grade Confirmation candidates from St. Pius X Church on May 3-4.

Bishop Rhoades continued, “We are called to be missionary disciples; to be moved and transformed by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, to grow closer to Christ and become His courageous apostles in the world today.”

The class of nearly 150 students, representing South Bend’s largest parish, was confirmed this weekend in two separate Masses. Students from St. Pius X School received Confirmation at the Saturday evening Mass, while the religious education and homeschool students were confirmed on Sunday afternoon.

Bishop Rhoades warmly greeted those preparing for Confirmation using imagery from the Sunday Gospel passage, recounting the story of the disciples on their way to Emmaus. “We are pilgrims on a journey, and we do not walk on that journey alone,” Bishop Rhoades said. “Jesus walks with us! Even when we are sad, even if we are depressed or discouraged, and even if we do not recognize Him, Jesus is present with us and invites us to know Him more deeply, especially through the Mass.”

The disciples who encountered Christ that day heard the Scriptures revealed to them and were included in Eucharistic fellowship. Upon seeing Him break the bread, their eyes were opened to His presence in their midst, and they became inspired to return at once to Jerusalem and speak of what they had just experienced.

Bishop Rhoades spoke of the similar possibilities in the Church today. “In every Mass, we have the Scriptures to guide us and we are witnesses of Jesus’ body and blood being broken and poured out for us,” he said. “Every time we are present at the Holy Mass, we become travelers with Christ on the journey to Emmaus.”

Bishop Rhoades further elaborated on the Scripture readings in light of the importance of the Holy Spirit coming more fully into the lives of those receiving Confirmation.

“In both the Gospel passage and through the words of St. Peter in his homily on the first Pentecost, we see the gifts of the Holy Spirit lived out as an example for us,” he said. “We are called to conduct ourselves with reverence and piety, to be open to the wisdom and counsel of the Holy Spirit, to pray that we may be able to know and understand the will of God, and to live courageously in the example of the saints.”

As part of his Confirmation homily, the bishop also asked some students questions about their chosen names and how the sacrament calls them to transform the world through virtuous action. In particular, Bishop Rhoades spoke with seventh-grader Gabriel Davey and eighth-grader Nathaniel Gerwels about their connections to the saints they chose to identify with.

Davey, who took the name Thérèse (of Lisieux), revealed that he was first introduced to her by Father Daniel Scheidt, the current pastor of St. Vincent de Paul in Fort Wayne, when he brought him a statue of her during a dinner about three years ago. He shared, “Father Dan told me she would follow and look after me if I trusted in her. Since then I have felt her presence and protection and have often seen signs of roses appear throughout my life.”

St. Thérèse was known for having a great love of roses, which are often seen as the signature of her intercession upon those who look to her for aid.

Gerwels shared with Bishop Rhoades that he chose the Confirmation name Paul because of the tremendous influence Paul had on the early Church and for leading so many people to Christ after experiencing his conversion. Bishop Rhoades congratulated both Gerwels and Davey for knowing detailed information about their new patron saints, and quipped they would be receiving applications for the diocesan Priesthood after they graduate high school.

Gerwels shared that he had been thinking about the Priesthood since sixth grade and would consider it more seriously now after receiving a personal invitation from the bishop. Bishop Rhoades took time at the end of Mass to thank those who had dedicated significant time and effort to making the Confirmation a success and also encouraged that the work of the Holy Spirit continue in the lives of the young students. He recognized the sponsors of each candidate for bearing such great witness to the faith, commended the parents and grandparents who serve as the primary educators in faith to lead their children on the path to eternal life, thanked the teachers and catechists who offered their service to prepare the young men and women well and stated how joyfully proud he was of those who became confirmed and now undertake a greater responsibility in leading holy lives of their own.

A reception followed after each Mass, where students were able to speak with Bishop Rhoades and take pictures with him. Each of the confirmed young men and women were also given a YOUCAT, the youth edition of the Catechism of the Catholic Church that was recently given to each of the pilgrims who attended World Youth Day.

Dan Allen, the director of religious education for St. Pius X, shared that “each student was given a YOUCAT as a sign from their parish to remind them that although Confirmation classes are over, the Church still wants them to stay active in their faith. And this provides a good resource for this to occur in a way that reaches them in their own language.”
Bishop Rhoades remembers heroes on Holocaust remembrance day

BY BONNIE ELBERSON

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades was present for the annual Holocaust Remembrance Day held April 28 at the Temple of Congregation Achduth Vesholom, along with Jewish clergy, officials of the Jewish Federation of Fort Wayne, which sponsored the event, local dignitaries, the Temple congregation and friends of the Jewish community.

Fran Adler, president of the federation, set the tone for the evening in her opening remarks. “We must remember,” she said.

It is important to remember the victims of the Holocaust, the survivors of the Holocaust and also their rescuers. Each year there are fewer people in all three groups so it is imperative that the Jewish community continue to recount the stories to prevent such an atrocity from ever happening again, Adler reminded her listeners.

Bishop Rhoades greeted those in attendance by saying, “It is an honor for me to be with you here this evening as we remember with great sorrow the Holocaust and as we honor with deep gratitude Danuta Renk-Mikulska. Shalom! Peace be to you. … I greet you with fraternal love.”

Mikulska, a Fort Wayne woman who was on hand for the event, was a Polish teenager when Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Her Catholic family helped hide Jews in an underground bunker on their property and it was her job to wash their clothes and scavenge food for them. She routinely risked her life in the effort and won recognition last year by being named Righteous Among Nations at a ceremony in Chicago.

“How fitting it is that we honor her this evening,” said Bishop Rhoades. “On behalf of everyone … I say to Danuta, ‘Thank you’ … for your courage and love. May God bless you and may God bless our friends, the Jewish community of Fort Wayne.”

Featured speaker for the commemorative event was Chris Nicola, a speleologist and cave specialist who has co-authored, “The Secret of Priest’s Grotto,” and a documentary film, “No Place on Earth.”

Nicola described the setting of his unbelievable story: “Amid the endless wheat fields stretching across the western Ukraine, there is a weedy hole in the ground. The only sign of cover for miles around is a low stand of hardwoods, withering in the heat a short distance away. With the exception of the sinkhole, there is nothing to indicate that one of the longest horizontal labyrinths in the world lies just underfoot.”

And so begins the story of Priest’s Grotto, a massive cave located in Ukraine on the land of a Catholic priest, which was the refuge of 28 Jews during the Nazi occupation of that area in 1943 and 1944. The Stermer, Dodyk and Kurz families lived through extraordinary means, “surviving off the land, and running supply lines at night like well-trained military guerrillas,” according to Nicola’s account.

Esther Stermer, matriarch of the Stermer clan, expressed their determination: “We are not going to the slaughterhouse,” Nicola related. The men of the families crept out of the cave at night and foraged for food and supplies, enabling them to survive horrible deprivation and miserable living conditions for more than a year, but allowing them to escape Nazi capture and exportation to the death camps.

In 1993, Nicola was one of the first Americans to explore the Ukraine’s caves after the fall of the Soviet Union. On that trip, guides showed him what appeared to be a campsite where signs of human habitation including old shoes, buttons and shards of pottery had been found. Local lore held that a group of Jews had fled to the cave during the Holocaust but no one in the area seemed to know what had actually happened or whether anyone had survived.

Over many months Nicola tried unsuccessfully to find a survivor from Priest’s Grotto, finally turning to the Internet for clues. He imbedded key words in the search code for his website on Ukrainian caves, hoping someone would contact him. Finally, he heard from the son of one of the survivors who said his dad was living near Queens, N.Y., and other survivors were living in Florida and Canada.

Since then, Nicola has concentrated all his time and resources to confirm the story by finding and interviewing the last living survivors of the ordeal. For many, the experience was difficult to recount and his book, “The Secret of Priest’s Grotto,” is a testament to his efforts.

“I wanted to tell the story they couldn’t tell themselves,” he said.

The book has since been made into a movie and a television documentary. Nicola also heads the Priest’s Grotto Heritage Project, a genocide awareness program seeking to build an exhibit commemorating those courageous survivors.

The Yom Hashoah program summed up the remembrance event. “On this day, special efforts are made to remember those who suffered, those who fought and those who died. … Although we are not physically there, we, too, are survivors.”
Catholic charities agencies helping storm-damaged southern U.S.

WASHINGTON (CNS) Catholic charities agencies were on the ground assessing damage after a series of storms with deadly tornadoes and massive floods swept through the southern United States April 27-29. The storms killed 35 people and left thousands without power while razing homes and businesses. Arkansas and Mississippi were the hardest hit, but deaths also were reported in Oklahoma, Iowa, Alabama and Tennessee. Georgia residents lost power, and the Carolinas and Florida experienced flash floods. In areas hit by tornadoes, thousands of people forced out of their homes sought temporary shelter while the National Guard, local police and residents sifted through the rubble searching for victims. Patricia Cole, communications director for Catholic Charities USA, said its disaster response operations team has been coordinating with local Catholic charities agencies in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, Florida and Alabama “where conditions on the ground are changing by the hour.” She said Catholic Charities USA also received requests for grants for financial assistance and is staying in close contact with Catholic dioceses and agencies in the damaged areas as they assess the needs in their communities.

Archbishop says botched execution highlights brutality of death penalty

OKLAHOMA CITY (CNS) — Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City said the botched execution April 29 of an Oklahoma inmate points to the “sordid history of the death penalty” and should bring the nation to “consider whether we should adopt a moratorium on the death penalty or eventually do away altogether.” The planned execution of convicted killer Clayton Lockett in McAlester, Okla., using a new three-drug protocol, failed, leaving Lockett showing signs of pain and causing prison officials to halt the procedure. Lockett later died of a heart attack. Republican Gov. Mary Fallin ordered a 14-day stay of execution for Charles Warner, an inmate scheduled to be executed two hours after Lockett. She also asked the state’s Department of Corrections to conduct a “full review of Oklahoma’s execution procedures to determine what happens and why.” During this investigation, Archbishop Coakley, in an April 30 statement, said: “How we treat criminals says a lot about us as a society and the care we have to administer justice with due consideration for the victims of crime, but we must find a way of doing so that does not contribute to the culture of death, which threatens to completely erode our sense of the innate dignity of the human person and of the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death,” he added.

Cardinal O’Malley: Sex abuse panel to stress accountability, education

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The new papal commission for protecting minors from clerical sex abuse will recommend stricter standards for accountability of abusers and those who fail to protect children, and will fight widespread denial of the problem within the Church, said Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston. “In some people’s minds, Oh, this is an American problem, it’s an Irish problem, it’s a German problem,” the cardinal told reporters May 3. “Well, it’s a human problem, and the Church needs to face it everywhere in the world. And so a lot of our recommendations are going to have to be around education, because there is so much ignorance around this topic, so much denial.” The cardinal spoke on the third and final day of the commission’s first meeting at the Vatican. Reading a statement on behalf of the entire eight-member panel, he said the commission planned to draft statutes for approval by Pope Francis to clarify the body’s “nature, structure, activity and the goals. The commission will not deal with individual cases of abuse, but we can make recommendations regarding policies for assuring accountability and best practice,” the statement said. Later, in response to a reporter’s question, the cardinal said such policies were necessary to fill gaps in Church law.

New York martyrs shrine launches fundraising campaign to remain open

AURIESVILLE, N.Y. (CNS) — A popular New York pilgrimage site where Jesuit missionaries were martyred has launched a $1 million fundraising campaign to stay open. The National Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs in Auriesville since the late 19th century has commemorated the site of a 17th-century Mohawk village called Oswennon. There, Jesuit missionaries Saints Isaac Jogues, René Goupil and John Lalande were martyred in the 1640s and 1650s. But attendance dropped by more than 50 percent during the shrine’s 2013 season. Collections brought in less than $100,000. That was despite a deluge of 24-week season and periodic novenas to support its staff and operate its 400-acre facility. The property includes five chapels, two museums, a candle shrine, a Jesuit cemetery, a visitor’s center and gift shop, outdoor Stations of the Cross and a 10,000-capacity columbarium.

Vatican statistics report Church growth remains steady worldwide

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The number of Catholics in the world and the number of priests, permanent deacons and religious men all increased in 2012, while the number of women in religious orders continued to decline, according to Vatican statistics. The number of candidates for the priesthood also showed its first global downturn in recent years. The statistics come from a recently published Statistical Yearbook of the Church, which reported worldwide Church figures as of Dec. 31, 2012. By the end of 2012, the worldwide Catholic population had reached 1.22 billion, an increase of 14 million or 1.14 percent, slightly outpacing the global population growth rate, which, as of 2013, was estimated at 1.09 percent. Catholics as a percentage of the global population remained essentially unchanged from the previous year at around 17.5 percent. However, the latest Vatican statistical yearbook estimated that there were about 4.8 million Catholics that were not included in its survey because they were in countries that could not provide an accurate report to the Vatican, mainly China and North Korea. According to the yearbook, the percentage of Catholics as part of the general population is highest in the Americas where they make up 63.2 percent of the continent’s population. Asia has the lowest proportion, with 3.2 percent.

Cardinal O’Connor’s mother was convert from Judaism, research shows

NEW YORK (CNS) — Cardinal John J. O’Connor, who as archbishop of New York cultivated and cherished his strong ties with the Jewish community, was born of a mother who was born Jewish. It is not known whether he knew that his mother, Dorothy Gumple O’Connor, was born Jewish. She converted to Catholicism before she met and married Thomas O’Connor, the late cardinal’s father. Mary O’Connor Ward, the cardinal’s sister, told Catholic New York, newspaper of the New York Archdiocese, that her mother never spoke about having belonged to another faith. The fact that Dorothy O’Connor was Jewish by birth came to light during a genealogical search undertaken by Ward at the prompting of one of her daughters, Eileen Ward Christian, who had begun digging into the family’s history. Ward said that when she was growing up, she surmised that her mother was a convert, but that the family never discussed the matter. Asked whether Cardinal O’Connor was aware of his Jewish lineage, she said, “I have no way of knowing that.” But she added, “I just don’t understand, if he knew, why something wouldn’t have come up before. He was so close to the Jewish community.” Messing about his probable reaction to the news, she said, “I think he would have been very proud of it.”

Supreme Court ruling allows prayers before public meetings

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Supreme Court ruled May 5 that prayers said before town council meetings in Greece, N.Y., do not violate the Constitution. In a 5-4 decision, the judges noted a historical precedent to opening local legislative meetings with a prayer and stressed that the government’s non-Christian nature of the prayers in the New York town were not coercive to those in attendance. Justice Anthony Kennedy, writing for the majority, said the prayers delivered before public meetings in Greece, a suburb of Rochester, “evoked universal theism” as a “call for a spirit of cooperation.” He also noted the historical precedence of such prayers, pointing out that the U.S. House and Senate have had a prayer before each meeting and a majority of the states have the practice of legislative prayer. Kennedy wrote that the “inclusion of a brief, conventional prayer as part of our federal exercise in civic recognition suggests that its purpose and effect are to acknowledge religious leaders and the institution they represent rather than to exclude or coerce nonbelievers.” He said that unless the prayers “over time denigrate, proselytize or betray an impermissible government purpose” they will “not likely establish a constitutional violation.”
American Heritage Girls to host 5K run/walk

FORT WAYNE — The St. Vincent American Heritage Girls Troop IN372 is hosting their third annual Patriot Family Fun 5K Run/Walk on Sunday, May 18, at 4 p.m. at Salomon Farm. Fundraiser proceeds will be used to send the troop to Washington, D.C., next June for the 30-year anniverary celebration.

The 5K run is chip timed with prizes for the top finishers. The public is invited to join this family fun community event for all ages. Registration is $20. To register for the race, get race details, and print out a paper registration form visit http://ittybittyurl.com/1n2P.

The American Heritage Girls is a national, Christian faith-based, character developing program for girls ages 5-18. The first troop was founded in 1995 in Cincinnati, Ohio. St. Vincent de Paul Troop IN372 is the only chartered troop in the Fort Wayne area. Their mission is “building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country.”

For more information about the American Heritage Girls visit ahgonline.org.

St. Therese, Little Flower to hold ‘Immersion’ program

SOUTH BEND — St. Therese, Little Flower Church will hold a Holy Spirit “Immersion” on Friday, May 16 from 7-9 p.m. and Saturday, May 17, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the parish hall, 5491 Ironwood Rd.

“Empowered by the Spirit,” a five-talk program, will be led by Father James Curtin, pastor of St. Dennis Parish in Lockport, Ill., in the Diocese of Joliet, who will address five key topics central to life in the Spirit: God’s love; salvation; the gifts of the Holy Spirit; spiritual growth; and transformation in Christ.

During the Friday-Saturday immersion, Father Curtin, members of the St. Dennis healing prayer team and others will share stories about how the Holy Spirit has transformed their lives. The St. Dennis team conducts Life inthe Spirit seminars and healing prayer events in their own parish and in other parishes. They will pray for a new “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” for all those who request it.

Register at St. Therese, Little Flower at 574-272-7070 or with Bill and Cathy Odell at 574-273-1702 or through e-mail to catherinemodell@gmail.com. Snacks will be offered on Friday evening and a light breakfast and lunch on Saturday. The immersion will conclude with a Mass for participants Saturday afternoon. A free-will donation to support the healing prayer ministry of St. Dennis Catholic Church will be asked.

Bishop Luers High School Academic Super Bowl team earned first place in Class C by beating Adams Central, Bluffton, Churubusco and Garrett high schools. The teams placed first in fine arts, science, math and social studies; third in English and inter disciplinary. Bishop Luers sent their Fine Arts and Social Studies teams to state on May 10 at Purdue University. Team members include Jonathan Baum, Allexandra Broom, Maddie Brown, Kaitlin Emmett, Isaia Fisher, Carolina Garcia, Shelby Gillenwater, Nathan Grabner, Mark Hellinger, Tyler Huth, Travis Javins, Duncan Justice, Samantha Justice, Isaiah Klotz, Megan Quigley, Jacob Schall, Andrew Schenkel, Sebastian Skordos, James Slocum, Sam Stein, Erik Woehlker and Makenna Zwicke. In the photo are, front row, from left, Makenna Zwicke and James Slocum; and top row, Isaiah Fisher, Mark Hellinger, Nathan Graber, Jonathan Baum.

Saint Vincent de Paul names new development director

SOUTH BEND — Caitlin W orm has been named d evelopment director of the St. Joseph County Council of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Worm fills the position vacated when Anne Hosinski Watson was promoted to executive director of the society late last year. Worm’s responsibilities include planning and managing specialized, ongoing programs to raise funds, cultivate relationships with donors and community partners and increase excellence in mission advancement through innovative marketing and development strategies.

Prior to joining the society, Worm worked in fundraising and marketing for Family Children’s Center and Boys and Girls Club. She holds a master’s degree from the University of Chicago’s School of Social Service Administration, where she was a recipient of the endowed Helen Claussen Scholarship. She also attended Indiana University-South Bend as a 21st Century Scholar and received a bachelor’s degree in political science.

Recently elected as a member of the 2014 class of Michiana’s 40 Under 40 community leaders, Worm currently serves on the advisory boards of the South Bend International Festival and the Pangani Foundation, and teaches college prep courses to adult students at Ivy Tech Community College. She also serves on the national board of Women’s Action for New Directions (WAND), an organization that empowers women legislators and activists to advocate for a stronger peace and security agenda in foreign policy.

The announcement was made by Hosinski Watson, who commented, “We could not be more pleased to have such a passionate and talented individual as Caitlin heading our development efforts. Her experience will be a real plus and help us reach the next level of productivity in supporting the funding of our many vital programs.”

The St. Vincent de Paul Society is a Catholic lay organization that administers food, clothing, financial and other forms of direct assistance to the poor and those in need in St. Joseph County. The society also offers self-sufficiency initiatives including the Food for Thought and Healthy Living programs and operates two thrift stores to support its mission.

Bishop Rhoades to deliver commencement address at Mount St. Mary’s University

EMMITSTBURG, Md. — Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will deliver the address to more than 400 undergraduate and graduate students at Mount St. Mary’s University’s 206th Commencement Exercises, May 11.

“We are honored Bishop Rhoades is returning to the Mount to deliver this year’s commencement address,” said University President Thomas H. Powell. “He is a true ‘Son of the Mount,’ having served as a professor and rector of our seminary, and his presence will certainly add to the excitement of this special day for our graduates.”

Bishop Rhoades is active on several committees of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, including serving as member and past chair of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth. He also serves as a member of the Administrative Committee of the USCCB. He continues to serve as Episcopal Moderator of the National Catholic Office for the Deaf. Bishop Rhoades serves as Catholic Co-Chair of the International Catholic Reformed Theological Dialogue on behalf of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The commencement ceremony begins at 11 a.m. in the university’s Knott Athletic Recreation Convocation Complex (ARCC).

The Saint Joseph High School Fed Challenge team won the Midwest competition in Chicago, in its fifth consecutive championship. The program is designed to encourage students to learn more about economics and about the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), the policymaking group that makes interest rate decisions to foster economic strength and stability. The Fed Challenge team members are, from left, Nolan Liu, Molly Clark, Nora McGreivy, Vivian Crumlish, Nora Kelly and Michael Oei, and coached by Julia Chismar and Phil DePauw.
Courage chapter ministers to those with same-sex attraction

BY ALLISON CIRAULO

SOUTH BEND — The South Bend chapter of the Courage Apostolate, a ministry of the Catholic Church that helps men and women who struggle with same-sex attraction (SSA) to live chastely, transitions this month from a lay-led ministry in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend to an official ministry of the diocese.

This shift was initiated by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, who serves on the episcopal board of the Courage Apostolate.

In the fall of 2012, Bishop Rhoades established a Courage chapter in Fort Wayne with Father Andrew Budzinski of St. Vincent de Paul Parish as the chaplain.

He also commissioned Father Daniel Whelan, pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, as the chaplain for EnCourage, a branch of the apostolate dedicated to supporting the friends and family members of those who experience SSA.

Both the Fort Wayne and South Bend chapters of this diocesan ministry are under the supervision of Fred Everett, assistant to the bishop and director of the Office of Family Life.

Dr. Phil Sutton has led the South Bend Courage chapter for the last 14 years, and he now passes the reins to Holy Cross Father Kevin Russeau, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in South Bend, whom Bishop Rhoades has commissioned as the new chaplain.

Father Russeau has spent the last nine years of his ministry working with Holy Cross seminarians, both at the Old College Undergraduate Seminary at Notre Dame as well as in the Holy Cross Novitiate in Colorado Springs. He learned about the Courage Apostolate for the first time last fall, but says that the approach to formation is nearly identical to the approach taken in seminary formation, whether related to same-sex or other-sex attractions.

“It’s exactly the same information that we were teaching in the seminary,” he says.

Father Russeau believes that the ministry of Courage meets a critical need in the Church today.

“If you’re trying to be a faithful Catholic and trying to follow the laws of the Church, because you know they will bring you happiness, and the Church always seems to be saying ‘no, no, no,’ it is easy to become discouraged,” Father Russeau says. “Church teachings are hard, especially for people who might experience same-sex attractions. This is why Courage is so important.”

The five goals of Courage are:

1) chastity in accordance with the Church’s teaching on homosexuality;
2) prayer and dedication to Christ, especially in the sacraments; 3) fellowship; 4) mutual support through mature friendship; and 5) good example.

Meetings are structured around a discussion of the goals, prayer and confidential sharing.

Father Russeau says that many people he encounters have already experienced what society has to offer in terms of the homosexual lifestyle and have found it unfulfilling.

“They find that Courage teaches a way that is fulfilling, even if it is difficult,” he says.

Father Budzinski, the Courage chaplain in Fort Wayne, says that Courage has been a “Godsend” to its members.

“In it,” he says, “they have discovered that the Catholic Church recognizes the reality that not an insignificant number of the members of the Body of Christ experience same-sex attraction and is not indifferent to them and, in fact, loves them dearly.”

Just as the Church offers support and love to struggling married couples or to individuals who are grieving, it must come alongside those who experience same-sex attraction, Father Russeau says.

“It’s our duty as a Church to offer support when we know people have a hard time as disciples,” says Father Russeau.

This subgroup needs special accompaniment, he says, “because our society does not understand the remedy. I think our society wants to be compassionate, but misses the mark in a lot of ways.”

In this regard, he believes that Courage serves as a prophetic voice.

“Society will say, ‘Do whatever you want; these feelings are natural.’ And yet we know that our Lord is saying something different. We’re all called to a life of holiness. Living chastely involves a disciplined life and it involves sacrifice.”

The greatest challenge for the Courage Apostolate in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Father Budzinski and Father Russeau agree, lies in spreading the word about the ministry so that more men and women may benefit from it.

When the ministry began 18 months ago in Fort Wayne, just two men were meeting with Father Budzinski. Their numbers have grown now, he says, to over a dozen.

He attributes this rapid growth to the work of the Holy Spirit in addition to the enthusiastic support of the bishop, the efforts of diocesan media entities to draw attention to the ministry, and the support of priests who have Courage business cards in their confessional.

Father Russeau invites anyone in South Bend with interest in Courage to contact him. He plans to hold meetings twice a month and to adapt to whatever needs may emerge from the group. Although he has not been formally commissioned to start an EnCourage chapter, Father Russeau says that he is open to the possibility if there is sufficient interest.

More information on the Courage Apostolate can be found at www.courageapc.org. Please direct inquiries regarding Courage in South Bend, including meeting times and locations, to Father Kevin Russeau at 574-234-3134, ext. 20, or krusseau@stjoeparish.com.

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Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend
Parishes, grade schools, high schools promote vocation awareness

BY TIM JOHNSON

The laity and the educational institutions of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend all share a role in fostering religious life and vocations. Some schools, such as St. Pius X in Granger, have adopted seminar-ians as a project. St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne has a strong vocation identity that has paid “dividends” with priestly vocations. And diocesan high schools have made vocation days and the presence of religious a priority.

At St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne, Dorothy Schuerman, pastoral associate, reported the parish offers discern-ment groups for men and women, high school age and older. Both meet once a month. Father Andrew Budzinski, parochial vicar, facilitates the men’s group, and the Sisters of Saint Francis of Perpetual Adoration facilitate the women’s group.

“Each time the group meets they pray, eat and discuss a book they are reading, then pray some more,” Schuerman said.

In the last four years, four men with connections to the parish have been ordained. Father Matt Coonan, Father Terry Coonan and Father Chris Lapp are all sons of the parish, and Father Ben Muhlenkamp was on the core team for the parish’s Life Teen youth group.

“Their examples got the ball rolling and others thinking about the possibility,” Schuerman said. “Currently we have 11 men in the seminary being formed for diocesan Priesthood, with a few oth-ers discerning their vocations in various religious orders and three in formation for religious life.”

“We also encourage those who are in the seminary,” Schuerman said. “We pray for them, priests usually visit them, school kids send cards and letters, parishioners might send them gifts and cards, they get involved in the liturgies when they are home, etc.”

The parish has a catechetical night once a year for the middle school and high school youth groups “where various priests and religious are invited to speak with...”

Contact: Sr. M. Lois,OSF • facebook: SSFPAvocations • 574-259-5427 • www.ssfpa.org

Religious gather to discuss their vocations with the students of Bishop Luers High School in October of 2013.

Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration

High School: Come and See: July 17-19, 2014
Retreat: November 22 - 23, 2014
Women's Discernment Retreat (Ages 18-35): October 31 - November 2, 2014
Or contact us to schedule a visit.

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IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF CHRIST

“A vocation is a fruit that ripens in a well cultivated field of mutual love that becomes mutual service, in the context of an authentic ecclesial life. No vocation is born of itself or lives for itself. A vocation flows from the heart of God and blossoms in the good soil of faithful people.”

Pope Francis urges us to “dispose our hearts therefore to being ‘good soil,’ by listening, receiving and living out the word, and thus bearing fruit. The more we unite ourselves to Jesus through prayer, Sacred Scripture, the Eucharist, the Sacraments celebrated and lived in the Church... the more there will grow in us the joy of cooperating with God in the service of the Kingdom .. and the harvest be plentiful.”

GOD MAY BE CALLING YOU TO BE A PRIEST.
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VOCATION OFFICE
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Msgr. Bernard Galic lays hands on Chris Lapp at his 2013 ordination.
Laying the groundwork at home and in the diocese

Promoting, praying for vocations to religious life

BY TIM JOHNSON

The Vatican has set the 51st World Day of Prayer for Vocations for May 11, the fourth Sunday of Easter, commonly known as Good Shepherd Sunday. The theme for this year’s celebration, which in 2014 falls on Mother’s Day, is “Vocations, Witness to the Truth.”

Pope Francis, in a statement for the occasion said, “No vocation is born of itself or lives for itself. A vocation to religious life comes from deep within the heart of a child of God who is called to respond to the call of Christ.”

At Immaculate Conception Parish in Auburn, the faithful are invited to celebrate a Holy Hour for Vocations on Tuesday, May 13, at 7 p.m. The liturgy will take place at Immaculate Conception Church, located at 500 E. Seventh St., Auburn. The Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration will share their discernment and vocation stories. Father Derrick Sneyd, pastor of Immaculate Conception, will celebrate. All are welcome for refreshments and socializing afterwards.

Information is available by visiting the parish website, xcauburn.org, or calling the parish office at 260-925-3930.

Holy Hour at Immaculate Conception, Auburn

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Little Flower Holy Hour at St. Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel

Many of the faithful of the diocese gather monthly for the Little Flower Holy Hour at St. Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel, on the grounds of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, where, led by a local priest or deacon, they pray for vocations.

The initiative was laity driven. Bishop John M. D’Arcy, after his retirement, strengthened the holy hour. The focus of the Holy Hour is twofold: First, that more men of good quality will come forward for the priesthood in the diocese and beyond; and the second petition is for the sanctification of the priests of the diocese.

The structure of the holy hour includes hymns, Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Scripture, hourlong rosary and silent prayer.

The schedule for the Little Flower Holy Hour is posted in the Today’s Catholic’s “What’s Happening section and in parish bulletins.

Serra Club of South Bend, Serra Club of Fort Wayne

The Serra Club is an international organization with approximately 18,000 members in 37 countries.

The club fosters vocations to the priesthood and religious life and encourages its members to fulfill their own Christian vocations to service. The Vatican has designated Serra as the lay vocation arm of the Church.

Serra clubs are named after Blessed Junipero Serra, who founded the missions along the California coast and evangelized thousands.

The Serra Club has two very active chapters in the diocese, one in South Bend and one in Fort Wayne.

Each club is a member of both a national council and Serra International.

Ray Vales, who is the Region 7 director of which the South Bend and Fort Wayne clubs are members, said, “Serrans are addressing one of the great needs of the Church, namely to foster more vocations and to support our current priest and religious. This is particularly so, with the call to evangelize. Also there is a great number of religious retiring, hence a great need for priests and religious to serve the faithful.”

Vales said the numbers indicate that 20 percent of priests in the U.S. are without a resident parish priest. With the growth of the Catholic population, there are now 2,520 Catholics per diocesan priest. At one time there were 1,270 Catholics per diocesan priest. The Serra Mission office prays for vocations, and support vocations is extremely important.

Serrans offer support to the diocesan Vocation Office. The clubs sponsor a Christmas luncheon for the seminarians and their families every year, rotating between the Serra Club of Fort Wayne and the Serra Club of South Bend. Members of both clubs are encouraged to attend the ordination of new priests.

The Serra Club of South Bend is led by Susan Vales, the current president. The club meets twice a month at the Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center in Mishawaka. Members attend noon Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Chapel on the first Friday of every month, followed by lunch and a meeting. The club also meets on the third Wednesday of each month with dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the cafeteria followed by a speaker or program in one of the conference rooms.

Some of the Serra Club of South Bend activities include raising money for seminarian education through the sale of St. Joseph Father’s Day cards, recognizing Mass servers with a certificate of appreciation and support, participating in the Newman Connection to connect new college students with their respective campus ministry office, including a priest area. Serrans' mission to pray, foster vocations is extremely important.

Deb Andrews, who serves as the club secretary, noted, “We have an Adopt a Seminarian program. The club chooses a seminarian and supports him through prayer, getting together with him when he is home, sending care packages or whatever else the adopter wants to do. This usually carries on after they have been ordained.”

Terry Cooran, the father of two diocesan priests, is the president of the Serra Club of Fort Wayne, and Father Tony Steinacker serves as the chaplain.

Andrews told Today’s Catholic, “Any actively practicing Catholic male or female, 18 years or older, is welcomed to join our club. If they do not know a Serran, they can speak with their church office or call the diocesan office to get the name of the president and the president would invite them as a guest to the next meeting. They can come as a guest and see what we do and how the program works. If they decide they would like to join, an application is given and they need to fill it out and give it back to a Serran that can get it to the board.”
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

our teens,” Schuerman added. The school also promotes vocations.

Even the parish’s upcoming Vacation Bible School will foster vocations in youngsters as young as four years old.

With the theme “Parade around the Our Father,” Schuerman reported, “the fifth day (of the VBS) was devoted to introducing religious vocations to the pre-k through fifth-grade children in ways they are able to understand. They show the fun side of priests and get them to understand that priests are people too. Having fun is not just for kids. Some priests are on bowling leagues, swim, play basketball, coach, jump on trampolines and roller blade. This brings excitement to the children. The craft projects for the week will reflect vocations as well.”

“In our parish a culture exists where every young Catholic man and woman is expected to consider and pray about the possibility of a vocation to the Priesthood and religious life,” Schuerman noted. “As a priest, Father Andrew simply talks about it with them. He will ask a young man if he is going to be a priest. He’ll usually respond, ‘I don’t know,’ which is good because it means he is open to the possibility and not just saying no.”

Another powerful witness is when Father Budzinski finds someone open to the possibility about a priestly vocation, “he takes off his collar and gives it to the person as a gentle reminder to pray,” Schuerman said.

Schuerman is a member of the vocations committee, which started a Shepherds of Christ group in the parish 14 years ago. The group meets every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, praying a rosary, some litanies and specific prayers for priests and religious vocations.

At St. Pius X School, Granger, one of Catholic Schools Week’s highlights is the Adopt-a-

SCHOOLS

Seminar program.

“The Adopt-A-Seminar program is an all-school project that allows students to participate in a school-wide stewardship program, while learning more about the path toward Priesthood,” said Betsy Quinn, the director of stewardship and evangelization at St. Pius X Church. “Students grow in their knowledge of what a seminarian is, what they do and what they are working toward, by participating in the program each year.”

Each St. Pius X School classroom is given a seminarian’s name and a list of their personal ‘favorite things’ including such categories as hobbies, music, books, teams, stores, snacks/desserts and beverages.

Students write letters, make cards and pray for their seminarian. The students enjoy creating care packages that are shipped to the seminarians with some of their favorite items and the special letters and cards made by the students.

The seminarians then correspond with the St. Pius students. And the students get to learn about the seminarian’s journey to the seminary.

“The students delight in receiving thank you notes, thank you videos and even visits from some of their ‘adopted’ seminarians,” Quinn said. “St. Pius currently has a parish priest that was once adopted by a kindergarten class from St. Pius.”

Quinn added, “Understanding one’s gifts and responding to God’s call to share those gifts in a life-chosen vocation requires deep reflection and self-awareness over time. Discerning a call to a religious vocation is a delicate and unique process involving the same.

St. Pius X School focuses on providing opportunities for students to reflect on their gifts. Students learn to share their special talents with their school and greater community. ‘Ultimately, the hope is that students will be able to translate those gifts into their own personal life’s call from God,’” Quinn said.

And the diocesan high schools also mark religious vocations awareness through special Vocation Days.

Donna Quinn, public relations director at Saint Joseph High School in South Bend, told Today’s Catholic, “We have Vocation Day each October. On this day we have an all-school Mass, which is concelebrated by visiting priests. Several religious — priests, brothers, seminarians and sisters from various orders and diocesan priests — come spend the day with the freshman and juniors in the theology classrooms.”

She explained that the religious “talk about their vocation and how they felt called to the religious life.”

Quinn said, “We will also have a group of seminarians spend the day with us later this spring.”

Adding to the atmosphere that fosters religious vocations, a Holy Cross seminarian has been teaching with teacher Megan Vera at Saint Joseph School, noted Quinn.

At Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne, Sue Mathias, campus minister there, directs the Vocation Day.

“We have a Vocation Awareness Day every year in October, sponsored by the diocesan Vocations Office, headed by Msgr. Bernard Galic,” Mathias said. “Msgr. Galic and members of his staff plan the day, which begins with an all-school Mass for the entire student body, at which Msgr. Galic celebrates and preaches about vocations.”

This Mass is followed by invited priests, sisters and brothers visiting the theology classrooms of freshman and junior students and offering brief presentations and question-answer sessions.

“This is always a wonderful day for the students to have an opportunity to reflect on their vocation in life,” Mathias added.

In past years at Bishop Luers, Sister Lois from Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration in Mishawaka came on a regular basis and met after school with young ladies interested in religious life.

Another Bishop Luers pastime to promote vocations has been the lunchtime Pizza with Padres for the young men who would have lunch with the school’s priest chaplains and then a general discussion.

God is calling. Are you listening?

The Congregation of Holy Cross has retreat programs for high school, college, and post graduate men designed to guide you along the way as you seek to hear and answer God’s call. Learn more, retreats.holycrossvocations.org
Hope in things unseen

I’m teaching a slightly unusual college freshman course this spring called “The Virtues.” It’s not quite philosophy or theology, at least not after the typical academic fashion. It’s an attempt to present the virtues as something students might want to practice and not just study.

We have spent a few weeks on each of the cardinal and theological virtues. We’ve talked about how they are presented in art, novels, movies and on television. We have also looked at their corresponding vices.

The discussion of some virtues is relatively simple for even a pagan philosopher like Aristotle. Virtues are good habits acquired through repeated practice — as with temperance, for example. But theological virtues are more complex. One cannot acquire the virtue of hope by simply hoping and hoping. Theologians say that hope is a yearning for union with God — an abandonment of oneself in the hands of Him whom we do not see. And it is a virtue we will no longer need in heaven, where it is replaced with its perfect fulfillment.

Poet Emily Dickinson pictured hope as “the thing with feathers” that glights with grace and “perches in the soul.” I think we have lost the understanding of this beautiful thought, and our loss is symptomatic of a profound lack of hope. Instead of putting our hope in God, who cannot disappoint us, we cast our hope in things which are constantly disappointing ourselves.

There’s an old name for this affliction: presumption. The Pennanti's against which St. Augustine fought in the fifth century, held that we can attain both perfection and salvation by our own power, without divine grace. One who thinks this way believes he has certainty already, and no need for hope.

The modern variations of Pelagianism are too numerous to list, but they all have in common the presumption that we can solve any problem if only we apply the right method. Time magazine recently ran a cover story on “mindfulness,” the latest fad for coping with anxiety, depression and stress. Its proponents avoid talk of spirituality, the article said. They believe that if they work and parent “mindfully,” they can sharpen their attention just like they can build up any muscle that waits for us. However, the Lord, the victor over death itself, is our Good Shepherd.

Reflection

Still, these several weeks after Easter, the Church proclaims its joy and faith in the Risen Lord. Still, it speaks the message long ago spoken by Peter on Pentecost: Jesus is Lord! He lives! Repent, renounce sin and turn to God! These readings introduce a new element. The devil, or at best forces unfriendly to Jesus, awaits us. We are unable to withstand these forces without God’s help. We need Jesus, Shered by Jesus and emphasized in the Gospel of John. This theme is that Jesus is the Good Shepherd.

Sheep raising and herding were popular livelihoods in Palestine at the time of Jesus. The images of shepherds and sheep would have been instantly understood. Jesus and the Evangelists employed these images to make clear and direct the message of salvation. The very technique in itself reveals the holy yearning of God to be united with us.

This reading insists that Jesus is the only route to heaven. Without the Lord, we reach for heaven in vain. Also important in this reading is its reference to a thief who slyly, and under the cover of darkness, steals the unsuspecting and helpless sheep away, taking them away to death and destruction. We need Jesus, Shered by Jesus and emphasized in the Gospel of John. These are tame, unassuming, non-predatory animals. They are vulnerable. So are humans. Indeed, thieves lay in wait for us. However, the Lord, the victor over death itself, is our Good Shepherd.

VIRTUE

Jesus is the Good Shepherd

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

4th Sunday of Easter

Jn 10:1-10

The Acts of the Apostles again furnishes the first biblical reading. As was the case last weekend, it is a passage read the time we used to sing the “Shepherds’ Song” in the literary style of kerygmatic. It goes to the essence of the Christian message. Jesus is Lord. He is the Redeemer. In Jesus, and only in Jesus, is salvation. Jesus bears God’s mercy and eternal life.

However, this mercy and eternal life are not thrust upon us. We must ourselves accept Jesus. We must turn to God. We must repent and reform.

The reference to Pentecost is not just simply to provide a date. Rather, its mention reminds us that the Apostles stood in the current of God’s long process of salvation and protection.

It further links the salvation offered by Christ, and salvation offered by the Apostles in the Lord’s name, in the context of God’s constant loving care.

First Peter once again supplies the second reading. Scholars dispute that the Apostle Peter, Simon Peter the Galilean, fisherman, literally authored this epistle. Such questions in no sense demean or discount the assertion that this epistle is the authentic and revealed Word of God.

The tests of the authenticity of Scriptures is that they were believed to be divinely inspired of Scriptures is that they were believed to be divinely inspired, and most important that they were accepted as such, and formally and officially identified, by the Church.

Whatever its exact origins, First Peter fully meets these tests. Its message is twofold. First, Jesus is the Savior. His blood, spilt on Calvary, reconciles for all time God with created humanity. Secondly, we must link ourselves with Jesus, affirming by our faith and our words the message of salvation. For us, our love for God and faith in the Lord. St. John’s Gospel is the source of the last reading. It dwells on a theme obviously, reconciles for all time God with created humanity. St. John’s Gospel is the source of the last reading. It dwells on a theme obviously, reconcile for all time God with created humanity.

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Jesus is the Good Shepherd

VIRTUE

INTELLECT AND VIRTUE

JOHN GARVEY

Pelagianism is too numerous to list, but they all have in common the presumption that we can solve any problem if only we apply the right method. Time magazine recently ran a cover story on “mindfulness,” the latest fad for coping with anxiety, depression and stress. Its proponents avoid talk of spirituality, the article said. They believe that if they work and parent “mindfully,” they can sharpen their attention just like they can build up any muscle that waits for us. However, the Lord, the victor over death itself, is our Good Shepherd.

Biking across Iowa for the heart and soul

When Father Joe Schneider climbs onto his 27-speed Trek Pilot and dips its front tire into the Missouri River, his summer vacation has officially begun. Then he pushes off and bikes across Iowa.

The Register’s Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa, better known as RAGBRAI, began in 1973 when two reporters from the Des Moines Register decided to pedal the width of the state — from Sioux City to Davenport — in a quest for writing fodder.

The seven-day, eastward voyage winds bikers through a different route every year, averaging 67 miles a day. For the past 31 years, Father Schneider has been among them.

It’s a chance for the 66-year-old pastor of St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Manchester, Iowa, to ditch his clerics and his priestly responsibilities. For one July week, he looks like all the other bikers — helmet, jersey, sunburned nose — and he is treated as one. Few realize he is a priest.

“I just own 20,000 bikers,” he told me. “I’m able to leave the office behind. I can just be myself. I’m not the priest.”

Some (bikers) call me Joe. And if someone asks what I do, I usually say, “Teacher.”

Fresh air and freedom wash over him — lungs filling, heart pumping, forearms tanning. “I feel really energized,” he said.

Father Schneider begins each ride at 5 a.m., when it’s still cool, and bikes into the sunrise. “You pray all the time. You find yourself singing a hymn — ‘Glory and Praise to Our God; ‘How Great Thou Art.’”

He’s been to nearly every small town in Iowa and recalls nights as when they pedaled across the hilly 90-mile stretch from Lakeview to Webster City; the flat stretch on Highway 20 when it rained all the way from Waterloo to Manchester; the big curve in Quinney where a state trooper stopped a biker for texting as she rode; the strong south wind from Coralville to Siquourney, where an Amish clan countered the humidity by handing out ice milk.

On Sunday, the prairie churches fill to capacity, road-weary travelers resting in worship. At night, the bikers set up tents in parks or fields. A local Catholic family enlisted by the church secretary often invites Father Schneider to stay in their home, serving lasagna and offering up a basement couch or guest bedroom.

Those little kindnesses — cold shower, hot meal, soft pillow — illustrate the generosity of strangers, said Father Schneider. “It shows you the real goodness of Iowa people.”

He’s known that generosity for 46 years as a priest and looks back on the many graces he’s been given — and he looks forward to his next RAGBRAI. “I’ve encountered God in many ways.”

He boils it down to a simple philosophy: “Love comes from God. God gives you that gift, and you can’t keep it to yourself. You have to give it away.”

Christina Capechi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn., and editor of SisterStory.org, the official website of National Catholic Sisters Week.

FATHER JOE SCHneider
In case I’m alive — please read instructions at the end of my life

L

iving Will. Physician orders for scope of treat-
tive. What does it all mean? Do I need one of these? Should I have one of these?

The short answer is no, you should not have one of them; you should have two of them.

Since 1990, federal law requires hospitals to inform patients of their right to accept or refuse medical treatment and their right (but not requirement) to present documents spelling out how they want to be cared for should they become incapacitated.

The list of documents above boils down to two types: one (first four examples) that states principles that you would like followed for your medical care and one (last four examples) that appoints a person or persons to make decisions for you if you are unable to. Either of these alone is insufficient; both together form a strong team.

Just as the Do not Resuscitate (DNR) does not interpret itself and needs a living and authoritative interpreter in the magisterium of the Church, so your written document cannot be specific enough for all situations and needs to be applied by an authoritative and trustworthy interpreter committed to the Catholic understanding of human dignity. Sometimes, representatives have legal responsibility only when patients are unconscious, but they also may have primary responsibility when patients are conscious but permanently unable to make rational decisions — as for patients with dementia.

Many people have their spouse as their primary health care representative and another trusted family member or friend as their backup. Whoever you choose and whatever document you fill out, there are five topics you should address in writing and in discussions.

Pain relief

While human suffering possesses a redemptive nature, we are not required to endure as much pain as possible. The Catholic Church supports the goal of keeping patients as free of pain as possible. In fact, painkillers may make a patient unconscious or even hasten death unintentionally. Sometimes, though, a certain amount of pain must be tolerated so that patients are not deprived of the right to prepare themselves with full consciousness to meet Jesus Christ.

Ordinary vs. extraordinary care

Catholics are not required to use all available means to prolong life. Every form of medical treatment can be ordinary or extraordinary given the proper conditions. Because of the fluid nature of illness and the almost unlimited scenarios that can arise, it is impossible to foresee all the different potential care decisions ahead of time. Instead of trying to detail these in a document, it is best to discuss different situations ahead of time with your physician and your representative.

Providing nutrition and hydration

Unlike the secular medical community that views artificial nutrition and hydration as medical treatment, the Catholic Church views nutrition and hydration on the same level as shelter and clothing — normal care. St. John Paul II stated that “administration of water and food, even when provided by artificial means… is morally obligatory” until it is seen that life will end imminently. A consistently Catholic advanced directive would presume that artificial nutrition and hydration are a given — not an option — unless certain uncommon and excessively burdensome conditions arise.

The Catholic Doctor Is In

Prohibiting euthanasia

As Catholics we are preparing for life-eternally with God. In preparing to meet Him, it does not make sense that we would ask someone to kill us by euthanasia. As St. John Paul II wrote in “Evangelium Vitae”: “To claim the right to … euthanasia, and to recognize that right in law, means to attribute to human freedom a perverse and evil will, capable of distorting an absolute power over others and against others. This is the death of true freedom.

Providing spiritual care

Finally, we must make provision for the most important medicine, spiritual medicine. For the good of our souls, we desire the three final sacraments of Confession, Anointing and Communion so that our sins are forgiven, our suffering is eased and we are given Bread for the journey home (Vaticanum). The power of these three final sacraments intensely unites us with Christ and provides “a solid rampart for the final struggles before entering the Father’s house” (CCC 1523).

For more information and a fill-in-the-blank Indiana Catholic health care directive go to www.indianacare.org. Click “resources” on the left then open the first document under “Health Care.”

Dr. Thomas W. McGovern is a dermatologist specializing in skin cancer and reconstructive surgery in Fort Wayne and is the president of the Doctor Joseph Lejeune Catholic Medical Guild of Northeast Indiana.

John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington.

GARVEY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

strengthens with exercise. If mindfulness is the modern virtue, it’s like temperance, not hope, in that one can simply become better by working at it. The same confidence in our ability characterizes the practice of cognitive therapy, behavioral therapy and psychopharmacology. I don’t mean to scoff at these modern methods. Method, formula and science can get us some distance toward solving the problems we encounter in life. The problem is that no amount of human effort can solve all of our problems.

We need God’s help, but spiritual talk is unfashionable.

New York magazine expressed something like disdain last fall when U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia said he believed in the devil.

No one dared criticize Pope Francis when he professed the same belief recently, but there were polite coughs to cover the sound. The idea that God is active in our lives is equally unfashionable, even among professing Christians. And yet if He is not, there is nothing to hope for.

St. Augustine argued against Pelagius that we can only find real happiness with the grace of the Holy Spirit, who appeared at Christ’s baptism in the form of a dove. We cooperate in the practice of the virtue of hope in the midst of trials and, by bringing ourselves with more self, we make room in our souls for the thing with feathers to perch.

May 11, 2014

COMMENTARY

SCIENTIFIC SEARCH

Gospel for May 11, 2014

John 10:1-10

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

SHEPHERD SUNDAY

Try the CrossWord Puzzle

Based on these Scripture Readings:

ACROSS

1. Saulors
2. Ball official
3. Expression of surprise
4. High rank in Ottoman Empire
5. Home owner’s assc.
6. Pocket
7. cows come home
8. Reverends
9. Central Daylight Time
10. Corruption
11. Reverberations
12. Type of seasoning
26, Zucchettos

27. Epochs
28. Saint necklace
29. Abbr. for decembar
30. Easter month
31. Easter symbol
32. Easter egg
33. Theater
34. Dueling sword
35. “My heart was ___”
36. “It does to heart”
37. Planet near Neptune
38. Monk’s brew
39. Downcast, as were
40. Ornaments, substance
41. Plant seed
42. Expert
43. Radio, as were

DOWN

1. Central processing unit
2. Disciple did to tomb
3. Time zone
4. Revolves
5. Very high frequency
6. St. Thomas ___
7. Related to Easter
8. Oranges
9. Netherworld
12. Wrapped about

May 11 and 2014

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Answer Key can be found on page 15
Sports

Eagles’ soccer team returns with core of champions

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — Coach Joe Strack and the St. John the Baptist Fort Wayne/St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel girls’ soccer team are returning a solid core from their 2013 championship team, but list just 12 to get in all our games this season, according to Strack.

This has been a challenge early on for the Eagles with other conflicts pulling girls in different directions this spring. Soccer allows 11 players on the field and Strack details, “We have actually played 10 games so far and results were not available. Runners will be competing next on May 8.”

“Looks like we are on track to get in all our games this season, which is a first in a long time,” Strack continued.

The Eagles are off to a 3-2 start with their experienced, physically strong squad and looking forward to the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) tournament.

In softball action, St. Rose/St. Louis remained unbeaten and improved to 2-0 with a 10-6 win over the defending champs from St. Vincent at Wallen Field on May 1. Before the game ended in four innings due to the time limit, the Twins had five hits with doubles from Abby Shoehan, Maggie Castelman and Grace Castelman. Pitcher Nevaeh Feasby had eight strike outs and allowed St. Vincent just two hits. The first CYO track meets were run on May 1, but scores and highlights to mmcas-tleman@aol.com.

‘FUN’ RAISING FOR HEART ASSOCIATION


St. Joseph School, Decatur, raised $1,512.46 for the American Heart Association. The school hosted Jump/Hoops for Heart that teaches students the importance of developing heart-healthy habits, being physically active can be fun and supporting research and education to save lives across the country. Third-grade participating students are shown in the photo.

BISHOP DWENGER HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCES SUMMER DANCE CAMP

The Bishop Dwenger High School Dance Crew will host a summer dance camp for kindergarten through eighth-grade students. The camp will be held at school July 14-18 from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. The cost is $60 per camper and each participant receives a free camp T-shirt. Registration deadline is July 11. See www.bishopdwenger.com for details and forms.
MISCELLANEOUS HAPPENINGS

Knights host Sunday breakfast at Queen of Angels

Fort Wayne — The Knights of Columbus will be serving breakfast from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Queen of Angels activity center, 500 W. State Boulevard. Tickets are $7 for adults, $3 for children 6-12 and $20 per family. Carryout will be available. All proceeds will be given to the charitable causes.

Pilgrimage to Shrine of Christ’s Passion

Godshen — Father Tony Steinacker, pastor of St. John the Baptist, will lead a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Christ’s Passion in St. John, Ind., on Thursday, May 15. Bus leaves after the 8 a.m. Mass and includes tour of shrine, 40 life-size statues and the Our Lady of the New Millennium statue. Full noon dinner at Dick’s restaurant and a stop at Albanese candy factory. Return by 8:30 p.m. The $56 cost excludes brief supper stop. Make reservations to Bev Stegelmann at 574-533-9418.

Graduation Mass for homeschool students

Fort Wayne — Northeastern Indiana Catholic Home Educators invite any diocesan Catholic homeschooling eighth-grade or graduating senior to the home-school graduation Mass and ceremony. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades will celebrate Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception at 3 p.m. with a ceremony to follow at St. Mary on June 6. For information contact Jenn McDonald at jenn@highlanddove.org or 260-485-8828.

New members invited

South Bend — The Christ Child Society of South Bend will hold a new member coffee on Wednesday, May 14, at 9:30 a.m. in the center. Scott St. Hear about the work of the Christ Child Society, meet members and tour the center. Contact Kristy Botich at 574-291-7523 or email wbotich@sbcglobal.net for information.

Trip with Father Wrozek planned

Fort Wayne — Travel to Ireland with Father Tim Wrozek Oct. 6-16. All inclusive price of $3,566 from Fort Wayne. Meet to discuss details Sunday, May 4, and June 1 at 3 p.m. at St. Joseph Church, Brooklyn Ave., north entrance.

St. Therese, Little Flower Theatre presents ‘Annie, Jr.’

Fort Wayne — Area students ages 7-15 will perform in “Annie, Jr.” May 16 and 17 at 7 p.m. at the University of Saint Francis Auditorium at 2701 Spring Boulevard. Tickets are $7 for adults, $5 for children 6-12 and $20 per family. Carryout will be available. After May 16, shirts available while supplies last.

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact event coordinator: Andy Zay at: azay@sbcglobal.net or call 260-356-1588

Lindenwood Retreat Director

The Center at Donaldson is seeking to fill our Lindenwood Retreat Director position. This is an exciting opportunity for the right person. The job duties include directing and managing the Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center in the spirit of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ’s mission. Other duties include expanding the center’s outreach capacity and strengthening its quality of service. This position is responsible for strategic planning, organizing, team-building, and managing all marketing functions to achieve the objectives of visibility and growth. The position will require some travel in northern Indiana.

We offer a friendly, caring work environment in a Christian-oriented, mission-based atmosphere, a competitive wage, and excellent benefit package. Résumé, including salary history should be submitted by May 12, 2014 to:

The Center at Donaldson
Attn: Human Resources
P.O. Box 1
Donaldson, Indiana 46513
Phone: 574-936-9936
Fax: 574-935-1735
E-mail: hr@poorhandmaids.org
EOE

For a complete calendar of diocesan listings visit www.diocesefwsb.org

Holy Sneakers! sign up for the NUN Run 5K or Brother Boogie 10K
Saturday, May 24 - 9:15

• Huntington, IN at St. Felix Oratory, 1280 Hitzfeld Street
• Registration forms at Anytime Fitness, YMCA, Zay Leasing & Rentals, Inc. or Online at www.runrace.net
• Proceeds benefit The Victory Noll Center, St. Felix Oratory, and Huntington Catholic Booster Club
• Registrants by May 16, 2014 will get race shirt. After May 16, shirts available while supplies last.

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact event coordinator: Andy Zay at: azay@sbcglobal.net or call 260-356-1588
Continued from Page 1

“Our Lord Himself sanctified and continues to sanctify human work, which He performed at the side of his earthly father, St. Joseph,” Bishop Rhoades said. Bishop Rhoades relayed the history of the parish. The first parishioners of the parish were Italian.

“In Italy, there is great devotion to St. Joseph. I am not surprised that this parish, founded by Italian Catholics, was given the title of St. Joseph,” he said.

A devout Italian layman named Loretto Starace was the leader in organizing the parish. He appealed to the fourth bishop of Fort Wayne, Bishop Herman L. Alerding, to establish an Italian parish. The bishop appointed an Italian priest, Father Loretto Monastero, to work on this endeavor.

Starace and Father Monastero established the Italian Benevolent Society named after Pope Pius X to assist sick and needy members of the Italian Catholic community. Father Monastero moved to Chicago and was replaced by another Italian priest, Father Antonio-Petrielli. He ministered to the Italian faithful and worked with Starace on the project of establishing a parish. Others helped them and went door-to-door recruiting future parishioners and raising money. Finally, they were able to purchase a two-story house on the corner of Fairfield Avenue and Basu Street. The church was located on the ground floor and the rectory on the second floor.

“This was the humble beginning of St. Joseph Parish, 100 years ago, in 1914,” Bishop Rhoades related.

Within two years, a simple wood frame church was built on Taylor Street. Shortly thereafter, St. Joseph School was established, staffed by the Sisters of Saint Agnes. In 1919, St. Joseph became a territorial parish, no longer an Italian national parish. But two years later, the parish was suppressed. The church and school were sold.

“It seems the pastor had told the bishop that the parishioners were not supporting the parish and it was in heavy debt. The parishioners were understandably upset,” Bishop Rhoades said.

After a year or two of turmoil, Bishop Alerding reestablished the parish and property was purchased at the corner of Brooklin and Hale in 1923. In 1924, a brick church and school was built. The Sisters of Saint Agnes returned. A new priest was assigned.

“After that rocky start, the parish experienced stability and growth,” Bishop Rhoades noted.

Bishop Rhoades said hard work led to big building projects in the 1960s — a new rectory, a new school in 1953, and a new church dedicated in 1961.

“And now here we are in 2014 with another exciting new beginning, the re-establishment of a stand-alone parish school,” he emphasized.

The community of faith has so much to be thankful for today, Bishop Rhoades said. He cited the devout pioneers of the parish who worked to build it initially, all the parishioners through the years who have been hardworking and generous, and the many priests and sisters who served the parish.

“The parish has always served immigrants, beginning with the Italians 100 years ago and now a significant number of Latino parishioners,” Bishop Rhoades said. “This is truly a Catholic parish, not only in name, but in deed, a community that welcomes all with the love of Christ.”

“I pray that you will continue to follow the example of St. Joseph and his holiness,” Bishop Rhoades said.

“He teaches us to be industrious and not lazy in fulfilling our duties and in serving the mission the Lord entrusts to us, whatever our vocation,” the bishop added. “St. Joseph was a man of deep faith who was completely docile to God’s will and ready to serve God’s mysterious plan in the Child Jesus.”

“St. Joseph was the protector, the guardian, of the Holy Family. I encourage you to continue to be devoted to him as your parish’s protector and guardian,” Bishop Rhoades encouraged. “Next to Joseph, we always find Mary and Jesus. In loving St. Joseph, we are led to Jesus and Mary. May St. Joseph intercede for you as you look to the future.”

In the nearly 13 years he has served as pastor, Father Wrozek said he believes his greatest accomplishment is celebrating and inviting the Spanish speaking community to come and be a part of the St. Joseph parish family.

“Father Wrozek also cited the ‘beautiful relationship’ with ‘daughter parish’ St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, and the neighboring parishes and schools he has served. He also praised the “devoitia and re-opening of St. Joseph School here,” he told Today’s Catholic.

“The people of God at the parish are a most generous and wonderful people,” Father Wrozek continued. “The administrators and teachers of the school have been a real treat for me. First with Mary Schreiber and then with Lois Widner as principals, my job as pastor of a campus of the school was just so very easy under their able leadership. The teachers are all superb,” he added.

“I can see and anticipate growth for the parish,” he said, noting, “an expansion of the school on the horizon, due to the numbers of people who will eventually find their way to this school and parish.

“I am really happy to be the pastor. I was baptized, confirmed and received my first Communion in a parish named after St. Joseph the Worker, and would like to retire when the time comes from this parish,” he said. “I am excited about the future of this parish. It contains a diverse membership, which enriches me and all who are members. I am even learning Spanish,” Father Wrozek concluded.

Patty Sermersheim, the parish bookkeeper, told Today’s Catholic, “My husband, Jerry, and I moved here 40 years ago this May from Lafayette, Ind.

“We worshipped at many parishes before choosing St. Joseph Church to be our family,” she said. “We felt very welcome here and still do.”

“We have had five children who have attended St. Joseph School and all have received their sacraments here,” Sermersheim said.

“Jerry and I started our ministry at the parish working with high school students and engaged couples,” she related.

“Life within our diverse parish family is challenging,” Sermersheim continued. “We have welcomed St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, shared a joint school with them and now are set to open a new school in the fall. Excitement, anticipation and a little fear are in all of our hearts as we feel the Spirit of God nudging us in a new direction.”

“I most appreciate the deep faith, love, support and acceptance of my brothers and sisters here,” Sermersheim added. “They are generous beyond measure. We are led by a good shepherd, Father Tim, and have hope and trust in God’s plan for our parish.”

Father Tim Wrozek, pastor, proclaims the Gospel (Mt. 13:54-58) during the 100th Anniversary Mass May 1 at St. Joseph Church.