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First National Prayer Vigil for Life post-Roe calls Catholics to bring God's love into 'empty spaces'

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The pro-life movement has “much to celebrate” because *Roe v. Wade* “is no more,” said Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Va., in his homily on Jan. 19 for the National Prayer Vigil for Life’s opening Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.



Bishop Michael F. Burbidge

But a “new important phase” for the cause of life “begins now,” he said. “Our efforts to defend life must be as tireless as ever” to change not only laws, but also hearts “with steadfast faith in the grace and power of God to do so.

“Our strength is our vigilance,” he added.

Those in public office, including Catholics, who “endorse policies that protect or grow the evil of abortion” also “must know that they are accountable,” said the bishop, who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Committee on Pro-Life Activities and was the principal celebrant of the Mass.

“We will all stand before God to account for what we did or did not do to safeguard his children,” he said. “This is especially true for those who profess our faith and have the greatest opportunity to protect the child in the womb.”

He said the cause of life is best served by “deepening our understanding of all the dimensions of this issue,” and learning new ways to communicate with love “the harsh reality of abortion.”

Bishop Burbidge also called for respectful dialogue with those who disagree about abortion, adding that endless “tweets and retweets,”

See VIGIL, page 7A



A panoramic view of a rally on the south lawn and steps of the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis after the Indiana March for Life on Jan. 23 captures the crowd of roughly 1,100 Catholics and other pro-life advocates who participated. (Submitted photo)

Indiana March for Life speakers tell participants the ‘fight for lives starts now’

By Natalie Hoefler

This year marked the first Indiana—or any—March for Life following the June 2022 overturning of the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion.

“This isn’t the 50th year of the pro-life movement,” said Right to Life of Indianapolis executive director Marc Tuttle at a rally on the south lawn of the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis on Jan. 23.

Rather, he said, “This is the first year of the pro-life

movement being able to actually stand for the babies, stand for the women, and be able to bring about a day when abortion is completely unthinkable in our state.”

The rally followed a Mass with three Indiana bishops, and the Indiana March for Life.

Roughly 1,100 Catholics and other pro-life advocates of all ages from central and southern Indiana and from the Lafayette, Ind., Diocese processed through the streets of Indianapolis to

See MARCH, page 12A

Pro-life Mass with three bishops and 1,100 people is ‘largest since pre-pandemic days’

By Natalie Hoefler

Mass was close to starting when 120 youths and chaperones from the Evansville, Ind., Diocese arrived at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 23.



Bishop Joseph M. Siegel of the Evansville, Ind., Diocese, left, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, center, and Bishop Timothy L. Doherty, of the Lafayette, Ind., Diocese, right, and several priests concelebrate a Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis before the Indiana March for Life on Jan. 23. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Fortunately, there was still sitting room—on the floor.

“The church capacity in the pews is 850,” said Father Rick Nagel, the parish’s pastor. “We set up over 100 chairs and still had people standing and sitting on the floor.”

He estimated there were 1,100 people from throughout the state in the church to worship at the Mass before the Indiana March for Life that day.

“This is the largest gathering we have had at St. John’s since pre-pandemic days,” he noted enthusiastically.

It was also the greatest number of bishops present to concelebrate the pre-Indiana March for Life Mass: Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, Bishop Timothy L. Doherty of the Lafayette, Ind., Diocese and Bishop Joseph M. Siegel of Evansville, as well as numerous priests.

Jeremy Goebel, director of youth and young adult ministry for the Evansville Diocese, said “seeing our predecessor [Archbishop Thompson] and his successor [Bishop Siegel] celebrating the Mass together was just beautiful.”

A call to be united in mission

Archbishop Thompson, who served as shepherd of the Evansville Diocese from 2011-2017 before he was appointed archbishop of the Indianapolis Archdiocese,

See MASS, page 10A

Pro-life court battle in Indiana hinges on question of ‘unwritten’ constitutional right to privacy

By Natalie Hoefler

On Jan. 19, the Indiana Supreme Court heard oral arguments on a case regarding Senate Bill 1 (SB 1), legislation enacted last August that provides sweeping protection for the unborn except in cases of rape, incest and in particular medical circumstances where the mother’s life is at risk.

The arguments addressed both a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on behalf of Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers against the state’s Medical Licensing Board regarding the constitutionality of SB 1, and a preliminary injunction on the law as a result of the suit.

The arguments hinged on the question of whether Article 1, Section 1 of the Indiana constitution protects the right to abortion. The text mirrors that of the Declaration of Independence regarding the right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Among those three rights, State Solicitor General Thomas Fisher focused on the word “life.”

“Science tells us that abortion terminates the existence of a distinct, living human being with unique DNA,” he said in his opening statement at the Statehouse in Indianapolis. “Ethics tells us not to end innocent human life.”

Fisher noted the plaintiffs would “urge the Court to acknowledge a novel, unwritten, historically counter-indicated right to abortion” under Article 1, Section 1 of the Indiana constitution.

He said both the question of the preliminary injunction and the decision in the lawsuit could not be determined “without confronting that question” of whether such a right exists.

Representing the plaintiffs, attorney Kenneth Falk of the ACLU in Indiana later concurred, saying, “I do agree with Mr. Fisher that the ultimate question in this case is do [the plaintiffs] have a probability of success of establishing that Article 1, Section 1 is violated by SB 1.”

When asked by Justice Geoffrey Slaughter, “What do you want us to do here?” Fisher stated, “I think the whole point here is let’s vacate the preliminary injunction. From our point of view there shouldn’t be anything left in the case to decide ... as to Article 1, Section 1.”

Fisher also addressed the issue that “abortion providers have no standing to assert the putative rights of hypothetical patients,” noting “there are no pregnant women in this case.”

Justice Slaughter took up this point

with Falk, saying, “We typically don’t allow health care providers to assert claims on behalf of their patients. ... Why is the abortion context different?”

“I think the plaintiffs have a say here because they are suffering injury,” he answered. Under SB 1, abortions can only be performed at hospitals or ambulatory surgery centers affiliated with a hospital.

In Falk’s opening remarks, he stated that the law injures the plaintiffs by prohibiting them “from providing necessary care to protect the physical and mental health of all Hoosier women. It will severely injure women and girls”

Regarding the state’s constitutional right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” Falk focused his arguments on “liberty.”

That right “comports with the natural rights philosophy upon which our constitution is based. Liberty has meaning, and its core value is the right to manage the most private assets of our lives, free from unwarranted government interference. This includes the right of a woman to reproductive control. ... This law invades the most private of spaces, where a private decision is and must be protected by liberty”

Regarding the life of the unborn, Falk argued that Indiana law has “never equated the life of the woman with the potentiality of the life that is the fetus.” As to Fisher calling an unborn baby “a distinct, living human being,” Falk labeled the comment “more of an opinion than a statement of fact.”

To define “life,” he turned to the Indiana Criminal Code, which he quoted as identifying “a human being as an individual who is born and is alive. Even under our tort law for wrongful injury or wrongful death where it’s possible to get damages for injury or death to a fetus, the fetus has to attain viability.”

At one point, Justice Christopher Goff suggested perhaps the people of the state should have a more direct say on the abortion issue.

“Why shouldn’t there be a referendum and the question put to the people?” he asked. “Why should that end with the courts or the general assembly?”

Fisher noted that citizens “have plenty of places in the process. They’ve elected representatives who enacted this law. There’s an amendment process to go through, and it’s fully available. That’s the system we have in Indiana. ... We have a process for [modifying the state constitution], and that process needs to be respected.”

appointed parochial vicar and campus minister of St. Joseph University Parish, Terre Haute.

(This appointment is from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

January 29-February 8, 2023

January 29 – 5:30 p.m.
Mass and dinner at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington

February 1 – 10:30 a.m.
Mass for Catholic Schools Week at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

February 2 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

February 3 – 2 p.m.
Virtual National Eucharistic Revival Bishops Advisory Group meeting

February 4 – 10 a.m.
Archdiocesan Pastoral Council meeting at St. Bartholomew Parish, Columbus

February 5 – 2 p.m.
Annual Scout Award Ceremony at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

February 6 – 6 p.m.
Mass and dinner with Fiat House Community, Indianapolis

February 7 – 11 a.m.
College of Deans meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

February 8 – 8:30 a.m.
Mass for students of St. Jude School at St. Jude Church, Indianapolis, followed by school visit

The oral arguments lasted one hour. The justices will use those arguments and transcripts of the original hearing from the lower court and *amicus* briefs filed in the case to make a ruling at an undisclosed time.

Overturing of *Roe* leads to state battles

The oral hearing was the culmination of a flurry of legislative and judicial events last summer and fall with the United States Supreme Court’s overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in June serving as the spark.

During a special session of the Indiana General Assembly in July and August, Senate Bill 1 was passed by the Indiana legislature on Aug 5, 2022, and signed into law as Senate Bill 1 by Gov. Eric Holcomb the same day.

The law went into effect on Sept. 15. It makes performing abortions a felony with the exceptions of rape and incest up to 10 weeks of gestation, and fetal abnormalities or medical emergencies until 20 weeks of pregnancy.

In a Monroe County circuit court on Aug. 30, the ACLU filed its suit against the law on behalf of Planned Parenthood *et al.* On Sept. 22, just one week after the pro-life law went into effect, the judge issued a preliminary injunction on the law until the case was decided.

Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita bypassed the state’s appellate court and petitioned the Indiana Supreme Court to

take up the case and to lift the preliminary injunction.

On Oct. 12, the Court agreed to hear the case but left the injunction in place until a decision was made after the January-scheduled oral arguments

Indiana is not the only state that has had judicial post-*Roe* activity this year.

Two rulings were announced on Jan. 5, one in South Carolina favoring of abortion rights and one in Idaho favoring the protection of unborn life.

South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster signed into law a Fetal Heartbeat Act on Feb. 18, 2021, restricting abortion after six weeks gestation. According to a Jan. 5 AP report, after *Roe* was overturned, Planned Parenthood South Atlantic filed a suit last summer claiming the law violated the state constitution’s right to privacy.

The case resulted in the state’s Supreme Court ruling in favor of the plaintiffs on Jan. 5, overturning the state’s Fetal Heartbeat law.

Also that day, in a 3-2 decision, the Idaho Supreme Court upheld three state laws prohibiting abortion, ruling the state’s constitution provided no implicit right to abortion, according to a Jan. 5 *Politico* article.

As with Indiana’s SB 1 law, abortions in Idaho will be restricted to cases involving rape, incest and saving a pregnant mother’s life based on certain criteria.

(To listen to the hour of oral arguments, go to cutt.ly/SB1OralArguments.) †

Official Appointment

Effective January 16, 2023

Father Antony Varghese Vattaparambil, O.F.M. Conv.,

appointed parochial vicar and campus minister of St. Joseph University Parish, Terre Haute.

(This appointment is from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †



Pope’s prayer intentions for February

• **For parishes**—We pray that parishes, placing communion at the center, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome toward those most in need.

See Pope Francis’ monthly intentions at archindy.org/popesintentions.



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Pro-life legislation, post-Roe legal challenges in spotlight at Statehouse

By Victoria Arthur

The Indiana Statehouse remains a center of public policy debate after the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* as lawmakers



consider a wide range of new pro-life bills, while the state Supreme Court weighs challenges to last summer's groundbreaking law that extended legal protection to unborn babies.

Indiana became the first state in the nation to enact a new law of this kind following a special legislative session from late July to early August that culminated in the passage of Senate Bill 1, which significantly limited abortion in Indiana. Later known as Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 1, the law went into effect on Sept. 15, but was almost immediately challenged in court by Planned Parenthood and the American Civil Liberties Union.

On Jan. 19, the Indiana Supreme Court began hearings on the law—as elsewhere in the Statehouse lawmakers were starting to review newly introduced legislation on a broad variety of pro-life matters. The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is closely monitoring developments in both branches of state government.

“We don’t know when the Indiana Supreme Court will give its ruling, but we are hopeful that SEA 1 will stand,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. “We pray for an ultimate decision that will promote a culture of life and respect the dignity of the pre-born and their mothers.”

Oral arguments on SEA 1 opened days before the 50th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* U.S. Supreme Court

decision in January 1973 that declared a constitutional right to an abortion.



Angela Espada

That decision was overturned last June with the high court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which returned regulation of abortion to the states and served as the catalyst for last summer's special session of the Indiana General Assembly.

SEA 1, which was signed into law by Gov. Eric Holcomb on Aug. 5, banned both surgical and chemical abortions with some exceptions, including pregnancies resulting from rape or incest (within 10 weeks of fertilization), and in cases of lethal fetal anomalies or to save the life of the mother (up to 20 weeks post-fertilization).

In addition, the measure terminated the licensure of all abortion centers and required abortions to be performed in hospitals or surgical centers owned by hospitals. Historically, nearly all abortions in Indiana have taken place in abortion centers, such as those operated by Planned Parenthood. Enforcement of SEA 1 has been on hold pending the legal challenges by Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers and advocates.

While the future of SEA 1 hangs in the balance, the ICC will focus on the 2023 legislative session now in full swing, continuing to serve as a voice for the unborn while also advocating for other key issues in the pro-life realm.

“We want people to remember that while there have been some gains since the *Dobbs* ruling, there is still much work

to be done—and not only as it relates to abortion, but to the entire spectrum of life issues,” Espada said. “We are encouraged by the number of bills that have been introduced so far this month to assist babies, mothers and families.”

This includes proposed bipartisan legislation for paid family leave and child tax credits—as well as child support and tax credits for the unborn.

Senate Bill 319, authored by Sen. Andy Zay (R-Huntington), establishes that an unborn child is considered a dependent child and, therefore, eligible for a tax exemption. Meanwhile, Rep. Elizabeth Rowray (R-Yorktown) has introduced House Bill 1009, which would allow a child support order to include the period dating from the conception of the child.

Sen. Shelli Yoder (D-Bloomington) has authored Senate Bill 255, which would provide a tax credit for child and dependent care for Hoosiers earning less than 250% of the federal poverty level. A similar measure, Senate Bill 238, is backed by Sen. Greg Taylor (D-Indianapolis).

In addition, proposed legislation promoting universal child care and pre-kindergarten education has been introduced by Sen. Fady Qaddoura (D-Indianapolis). Among other provisions, Senate Bill 471 would provide tax credits for employers who provide child care for their employees.

These efforts follow the second key outcome of last summer's special legislative session—providing Hoosiers with relief from soaring inflation. That included the allocation of \$45 million to support pregnant women, postpartum mothers, babies and families.

Fiscal concerns will top the agenda for this long session of the General Assembly,

held every two years and culminating in passage of the state budget, likely in late April or early May.

For the ICC, measures that support babies, mothers and families are of paramount importance, in line with the long history of Catholic social teaching. Protecting the most vulnerable and affirming human dignity from conception to natural death will remain the most pressing of the Church's priorities, according to Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC.

For example, another measure that the ICC will support in this legislative session concerns the dignified handling of the remains of a baby lost through miscarriage. House Bill 1058, introduced by Rep. Randall Frye (R-Greensburg), would establish that a health care facility may transfer the remains of a miscarried child to a nonprofit organization that provides funerals, cremations or burials.

“The Church's social doctrine insists on the profound dignity of the human person, a principle that guides the ICC's policy work,” Mingus said. “Of the many bills filed this session, we will work to support the policies that affirm this dignity and provide material support for mothers and families.”

To follow priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church's position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †



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To learn more about leaving a Catholic legacy through a bequest, contact the Catholic Community Foundation (CCF) at 317-236-1482 or ccf@archindy.org.

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A Special Word to Those Who Have Had an Abortion ...

*Do not give in to discouragement and do not lose hope...
If you have not already done so, give yourselves over with humility and trust to repentance. The Father of mercies is ready to give you his forgiveness and his peace ...
~Saint John Paul II, The Gospel Life*



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Editorial

The work to end abortion—and to help mothers in need—is far from over

Pray for an end to abortion.
Reza por el fin del aborto.

Whether in English, Spanish or any other language, the heartfelt message above should strike a chord with every generation.

It should speak to cultures across the globe as well.

And Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, our Jewish brothers and sisters and people of every faith tradition should be haunted by the statistics—64 million children lost to abortion and counting in the U.S. alone. They should do all they can to make sure unborn children are protected in their mother's womb, until they are delivered to live the life our Creator has planned for them.

While some in society sadly still view unborn children as a burden, our faith instructs us nothing could be further from the truth. We are taught to value and protect all human life, from conception to natural death. And as disciples of Jesus, we will continue to engage in this battle, which, despite some who believe differently, is far from over.

The 2023 March for Life in Washington on Jan. 20 may have been viewed as a celebration of sorts. It marked the first time since the initial march in 1974 that *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion on demand, was no longer the law of the land.

Last June, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which centered on a Mississippi law that banned abortion after 15 weeks, overturned *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*, stating that the rulings in these earlier cases erroneously recognized a right to abortion in the U.S. Constitution. As a result of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs*, the matter of regulating or restricting abortion was returned to state legislatures.

Some states have already begun taking drastic actions. California has become a sanctuary state and allows abortion through birth. Proposition 1, a ballot measure passed by its residents last November, amended the state constitution to make abortion and contraceptive access a fundamental right for Californians.

Other states, like Indiana, are working to strengthen its pro-life witness. As reported on page 2 of this week's issue of *The Criterion*, the Indiana Supreme Court heard oral arguments on Jan. 19 on a case regarding Senate Bill 1, legislation enacted last August that provides extensive protections for the unborn from abortion except in cases of rape, incest and in particular medical circumstances where the mother's life is at risk.

The arguments addressed both a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers against the state's Medical Licensing Board regarding the constitutionality of SB 1, and a preliminary injunction on the law as a result of the suit.

The arguments involved the question



A woman holds her daughter during the opening Mass of the National Prayer Vigil for Life on Jan. 19 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

of whether the Indiana constitution protects the right to abortion.

Although it is not known when a court decision will be announced, we pray Indiana justices uphold the legislation and assist Hoosiers' efforts in building a culture of life.

Jeanne Mancini, March for Life president, told attendees at a rally prior to the national march on Jan. 20 that "the country and world changed" when *Roe* was reversed last summer. But she said the annual March for Life would continue in Washington until abortion is "unthinkable."

"While the March began as a response to *Roe*, we don't end as a response to *Roe* being overturned," Mancini said. "Why? Because we are not yet done."

We must continue to do all we can to change minds and convert hearts. Despite the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling and pro-life legislation introduced in various states, there are many who still believe abortion is a fundamental right.

Our outreach assisting mothers and their unborn children will be paramount as we continue our mission to transform society. "Walking with Moms in Need" is an important ministry to assist our efforts, and resources can be found at www.walkingwithmomsindy.org.

Pregnant and parenting moms in need "really need to be accompanied to the point they know they're loved and supported," said Brie Anne Varick, coordinator of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, after last June's Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe*. "Then they can choose life because they know they are loved by God, supported by the community and can give their child a good life or have the courage to give their child to a family who can give them a good life."

"This is where our pro-life efforts need to go. Walk with moms in need, love them into life and help them choose life."

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/Sean Gallagher

Lessons in pro-life leadership learned at the March for Life

For the past 50 years, pro-life advocates of all ages, but especially the young, have come from across the country in January to Washington to take part in the national March for Life. They walked each year with thousands like themselves to the Supreme Court, hoping and praying that unborn children would be safe from



harm in their mothers' wombs.

The dreams of the past 50 years began to be realized last summer when the high court in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturned its 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion across the country.

Many states across the country, including Indiana, soon enacted laws giving legal protection to unborn children. Other states, in contrast, strengthened the legality of abortion in their jurisdictions, going so far as to offer to pay for women from other states to come there to have abortions.

So, clearly, the effort to build up a culture of life where abortion is unthinkable is far from over.

I attended the national March for Life for the first time this year, serving as a chaperone for a group of 25 students from Lumen Christi Catholic High School in Indianapolis, including two of my sons who are enrolled there.

As I took part in the march and reflected on all that happened, I saw lessons in pro-life leadership that led to the historic *Dobbs* ruling and should guide the continued work of pro-life advocates now and in the years to come.

With thousands taking part in the march and many groups of people, often high school students, college students, seminarians and young adult men and women religious, the teens in the small group from Lumen Christi could easily get separated from each other.

As one of five adult chaperones on the trip, I at times walked at the head of our group, holding up high a Lumen Christi logo so the students behind me could know where they should be.

At times, I would hand off the logo to another chaperone and go to the back of the group, especially when I suspected that some students had fallen behind when other marchers walked in front of them.

At other moments, I would journey alongside some of the young men and women from Lumen Christi as we made our way to the Supreme Court on the packed streets of Washington.

Marching ahead. Walking behind. Journeying beside. Those are all ways of showing leadership in the pro-life movement that has gotten it to this historic moment, where giving legal protection to the unborn is possible.

From the time that *Roe* legalized abortion across the country in 1973, there were strong pro-life advocates who courageously marched out ahead of others who did not yet know the vital importance of the cause to defend life.

At other times, pro-life people would go to the back and lovingly seek to draw back to the Gospel of life people who might have doubts about the cause or who even disagreed with it.

Still others gave encouragement while they walked beside people who had worked long and hard in the pro-life movement, but were worn down by years of seeing their dreams of a culture of life failing to come to fruition.

Each of us who are missionaries of the Gospel of life in different circumstances in our lives and in our relationships with different people may need to march ahead, go to the back or journey beside.

And the work we do in those places may be very different from the tasks taken up by others.

Before the march, the Lumen Christi group went to Mass at a parish in Rockville, Md. At the end of the Mass, the priest, noting that there were visitors in the church who were going to take part in the march, said that people in his parish were going to pray before the exposed Blessed Sacrament all day for the cause of life.

I also knew that my wife Cindy was at home in Indiana praying and fasting for the group from Lumen Christi, and especially for the young people who are such joyful witnesses of the sanctity of life.

Speakers at the rally before the march came from all walks of life—politicians seeking to pass pro-life laws, Pro Football Hall of Fame member and former Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy, and actor Jonathan Roumie, who plays Jesus in the TV series "The Chosen."

Each of us, with our own God-given gifts and talents, can contribute in our own way to the building up a culture of life in our society.

In the wake of *Dobbs*, that effort needs to continue by people marching out front, walking to the back and journeying alongside others in this great pilgrimage of life.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter for The Criterion.) †



Students from Lumen Christi Catholic High School in Indianapolis stand on Jan. 20 in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington while participating in the March for Life. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Catholic schools emphasize faith, excellence and service

Jan. 29 to Feb. 4, 2023, has been designated as Catholic Schools Week in dioceses throughout the United States. Parishes and schools in our archdiocese typically observe this week with Masses, assemblies and other activities for students, families, parishioners and community members. For the past 47 years, Catholic Schools Week, which is typically held the last week in January, has been sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association.

The theme for this year is “Catholic schools: Faith. Excellence. Service.” These three pillars are what keep Catholic schools strong, especially in times of adversity like the COVID-19 pandemic that did so much damage to our society. Like churches, businesses and other organizations, schools were hit hard by the pandemic. Most tried to respond as best they could—providing virtual, distance learning opportunities, but the consensus is that student learning suffered during this period.

National statistics show that our Catholic schools weathered the storms caused by the pandemic better than many other school systems because of their unwavering commitment to students and their families. While taking every possible precaution to ensure the safety of students, teachers and staff, our schools stayed open

whenever possible, and they continued to emphasize faith, excellence and service as the hallmarks of their mission.

We are right to call attention to the contributions made by Catholic schools to our Church and our society. Here in central and southern Indiana, we have a rich tradition and history of Catholic education. Who could fail to be impressed by, and grateful for, the heritage that is ours? We all owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the women and men—clergy, religious and lay people—who built our schools and who have sustained our commitment to Catholic education for nearly 200 years in spite of many obstacles.

Catholic schools continue the teaching ministry of Jesus. To be faithful to this mission, they must be Christ-centered in witness of word and action. They must also demonstrate the transformative power of prayer by helping students, and the entire school community, not only to learn about Jesus but to encounter him in Word, sacrament and service.

Catholic schools help adults, youths and children in diverse regions of our archdiocese come to a deeper understanding of God’s plan for human life and for all creation. Catholic schools are powerful instruments of evangelization—helping members of

the Catholic community and others from many diverse faiths, cultures and economic backgrounds grow intellectually, personally and spiritually as members of the one family of God.

Catholic schools are also vital to the social ministry of the Church—through the assistance they provide to students and families in need, but also in their commitment to teaching social justice and to providing students with opportunities to serve others.

Catholic schools contribute directly to the health and vitality of the Church. Along with parish religious education programs, youth ministry and other means of lifelong faith formation and education, our Catholic schools provide religious education classes, sacramental preparation, liturgical and prayer experiences, and opportunities for Christian witness and service. They help form the faith community, and they challenge us to look beyond our own needs to the urgent needs of individuals, families and society at large.

Considering the powerful effect that Catholic schools have on the lives of individuals, families and local communities, it is understandably painful—even tragic—when one of our schools closes.

Research confirms what most of us know already. When a Catholic school

closes, it is usually because of finances. We can help our schools become stronger financially, but only if they are truly growing in their Catholic identity, welcoming new (and increasingly diverse) students, and increasing their capacity for financial management and fundraising, especially through stewardship education and endowment development.

Archdiocesan, parish and school leaders all want our Catholic schools to demonstrate a vibrant, hope-filled spirit that proclaims to the whole world that Christ is alive and active—in our homes, in our parishes and school communities, and in our world. We want every Catholic school in our archdiocese to be a vibrant community of faith that is carrying out the teaching ministry of Jesus in ways that are visible, transformative and service-oriented.

Catholic schools are a great gift, and all of us who benefit from this gift have a serious responsibility to nurture and share this “pearl of great price” with the families and children of today and tomorrow.

Please take a moment to join me next week in praying for the continued success of our Catholic schools. And if you get a chance, say a special word of thanks to the dedicated women and men who make Catholic schools in our archdiocese vibrant centers of faith, excellence and service. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Las escuelas católicas hacen énfasis en la fe, la excelencia y el servicio

En todas las diócesis de Estados Unidos se ha designado del 29 de enero al 4 de febrero de 2023 como la Semana de las Escuelas Católicas. Las parroquias y escuelas de nuestra Arquidiócesis por lo general celebran esta semana con misas, asambleas y otras actividades para estudiantes, familias, feligreses y miembros de la comunidad. Desde hace 47 años, la Semana de las Escuelas Católicas, que normalmente tiene lugar la última semana de enero, está patrocinada por la Asociación Nacional de Educación Católica (NCEA).

El tema de este año es “Escuelas católicas: Fe. Excelencia. Servicio.” Estos son los tres pilares que preservan la solidez de las escuelas católicas, especialmente en tiempos de adversidad como la pandemia de COVID-19 que tanto daño hizo a nuestra sociedad. Al igual que las iglesias, las empresas y otras organizaciones, las escuelas se vieron gravemente afectadas por la pandemia. La mayoría intentó responder de la mejor manera posible, ofreciendo oportunidades de aprendizaje virtual a distancia, pero el consenso es que este período afectó el aprendizaje de los estudiantes.

Las estadísticas nacionales muestran que nuestras escuelas católicas enfrentaron las tormentas causadas por la pandemia mejor que muchos otros sistemas escolares, gracias a su inquebrantable compromiso con los alumnos y sus familias. Al tiempo que tomaban todas las precauciones posibles para garantizar la seguridad de alumnos,

profesores y personal, nuestras escuelas permanecieron abiertas en la medida de lo posible, y siguieron haciendo hincapié en la fe, la excelencia y el servicio como rasgos distintivos de su misión.

Tenemos razón al destacar los aportes de las escuelas católicas a nuestra Iglesia y a nuestra sociedad. Aquí, en el centro y el sur de Indiana, tenemos una rica tradición e historia de educación católica. ¿Quién no siente admiración y agradecimiento por este patrimonio que es de todos? Todos tenemos una enorme deuda de agradecimiento con las mujeres y los hombres—sacerdotes, religiosos y laicos—que construyeron nuestras escuelas y que han mantenido nuestro compromiso con la educación católica durante casi 200 años, aún a pesar de muchos obstáculos.

Las escuelas católicas continúan con el ministerio de enseñanza de Jesús. Para ser fieles a esta misión, deben estar centrados en Cristo en el testimonio de palabra y de acción. También deben demostrar el poder transformador de la oración ayudando a los alumnos, y a toda la comunidad escolar, no solamente a conocer a Jesús, sino a encontrarse con Él en la Palabra, los sacramentos y el servicio.

Las escuelas católicas ayudan a adultos, jóvenes y niños de diversas regiones de nuestra Arquidiócesis a tener una noción más profunda del plan de Dios para la vida humana y para toda la creación. Las escuelas católicas son poderosos instrumentos de evangelización: ayudan a los miembros de

la comunidad católica y a otras personas de creencias, culturas y entornos económicos muy diversos a crecer intelectual, personal y espiritualmente como miembros de la única familia de Dios.

Las escuelas católicas son también vitales para el ministerio social de la Iglesia, mediante la ayuda que prestan a los alumnos y a las familias necesitadas, pero también por su compromiso con la enseñanza de la justicia social y por ofrecer a los alumnos oportunidades de servir a los demás.

Las escuelas católicas contribuyen directamente a la salud y vitalidad de la Iglesia. Junto con los programas parroquiales de educación religiosa, la pastoral juvenil y otros medios de formación y educación en la fe a lo largo de toda la vida, nuestras escuelas católicas ofrecen clases de educación religiosa, preparación sacramental, experiencias litúrgicas y de oración, y oportunidades para el testimonio y el servicio cristianos. Ayudan a formar la comunidad de fe y nos desafían a mirar más allá de nuestras propias necesidades para atender las necesidades urgentes de personas, familias y de la sociedad en general.

Teniendo en cuenta el poderoso efecto que las escuelas católicas tienen en la vida de las personas, las familias y las comunidades locales, resulta comprensiblemente doloroso, e incluso trágico, el cierre de una de nuestras escuelas.

Las investigaciones confirman lo que la mayoría de nosotros ya sabemos: que cuando una escuela católica cierra,

generalmente es por motivos económicos. Podemos ayudar a nuestros colegios a fortalecerse económicamente, pero únicamente si crecen verdaderamente en su identidad católica, acogen a nuevos alumnos (cada vez más diversos) y aumentan su capacidad de gestión financiera y recaudación de fondos, especialmente a través de la educación sobre la corresponsabilidad y la dotación de recursos.

Los líderes arquidiocesanos, parroquiales y escolares desean que nuestras escuelas católicas demuestren un espíritu vibrante y lleno de esperanza que proclame al mundo entero que Cristo está vivo y activo, en nuestros hogares, en nuestras parroquias y comunidades escolares, y en nuestro mundo. Deseamos que cada escuela católica de la Arquidiócesis sea una comunidad vibrante de fe que lleve a cabo el ministerio de enseñanza de Jesús de manera visible, transformadora y orientada al servicio.

Las escuelas católicas son un gran regalo, y todos los que nos beneficiamos de este tenemos la enorme responsabilidad de cuidar y compartir esta «perla preciosa» con las familias y los niños de hoy y de mañana.

Les pido que a lo largo de la próxima semana, dediquen un momento para rezar conmigo por el éxito continuado de nuestras escuelas católicas. Y si tiene ocasión, dedique unas palabras especiales de agradecimiento a las mujeres y hombres que, mediante su empeño, hacen de las escuelas católicas de nuestra Arquidiócesis vibrantes centros de fe, excelencia y servicio. †

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

January 30, 31

St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish, 1870 W. Oak St., Zionsville, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese). **Parish Mission**, 6:30 p.m., Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers presenting, free. Limited childcare for ages 1-5 for \$2 per child. Information: zionsvillecatholic.com/mission or 317-873-2885, ext. 301.

February 1

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

February 3

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the**

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass 5:45 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Rd. W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:45 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

February 4

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Rd. W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, confessions 8:10-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

Maryland Community Church, 4700 S. Indiana 46, Terre Haute. **Soup Bowl Benefit**, 3-5 p.m., sponsored by Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank, guests select hand-crafted bowl to sample soups from local chefs, \$30. Information, tickets: 812-232-1447 or cutt.ly/SoupBowl13.

February 4-5

St. Mary Church, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **Bruté Weekend**, Sat. 4:30 p.m., Sun. 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Masses celebrated by Father Joseph Moriarty, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary rector, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501 or esanders@archindy.org.

February 5, 19

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam.

February 9

Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Bede Theater, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Cyprian Davis Lecture "Jazz is Love: The Life and Music of Mary Lou Williams,"** 7-9 p.m. CT, musician and author Deanna Witkowski presenting free. Information: Mary Jeanne Schumacher, 812-357-6501.

February 10

St. John the Evangelist Parish Hall, Pan Am Building, 126 W., Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Pro-life Film Series: Compassion and Choice Denied**, 6-9 p.m., documentary and panel discussion on legalized physician suicide, freewill offering. Information: 317-407-6881 or smdye1@gmail.com.

February 11

Sidewalk Advocates for Life training, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., location and other details given by phone, \$10 for materials, register by Feb. 6. Information, registration: Sheryl Dye, smdye1@gmail.com or 317-407-6881.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Parish Life Center, 399 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Wedding Reception for Married Couples**, 6:30-10:30 p.m., doors open 6:15 p.m., dinner 7 p.m., dancing, door prizes, \$80 per couple, \$240 per table of four couples, sponsored by Celebrate Marriage ministry. Information, registration: Marcy Renken, 317-489-1557, cutt.ly/

CelebrateRomance, info@celebratemarriageinstitute.com.

Holy Name of Jesus Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **2411 Memorial Mass and speakers**, 12:30-3:30 p.m., Mass in memory of 2,411 aborted babies discovered in 2020 on properties owned by abortionist Ulrich Klopfer, explanation 12:30-1 p.m., Mass 1-2 p.m., speakers 2-3:30 p.m. including Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, Right to Life executive director Marc Tuttle and more. Information: 317-788-7127.

St. Malachy Parish, 9833 E. CR 750 N., Brownsburg. **Marriage on Purpose Conference**, 8:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m., doors open 7:15 a.m., Benedictine College Theology Professor Andrew Swafford and Sarah Swafford presenters, \$30 single, \$50 couple, includes lunch. Information, registration: www.marriageonpurpose.info, 317-852-3195 or info@stmalachy.org.

February 11-12

St. Luke the Evangelist Church, 7575 Holliday Dr. E., Indianapolis. **Bruté Weekend**,

Sat. 8:15 a.m. and 5 p.m., Sun. 7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Masses celebrated by Father Daniel Bedel, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary spiritual director, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501 or esanders@archindy.org.

February 12-13

St. John Paul II Parish, 223 W. St. Joe Rd., Sellersburg. **Parish Mission**, Sun. 1-2:30 p.m., Mon. 6-7:30 p.m., "Engagin' Cajun" national Catholic speaker Mike Patin presents "Jesus' Great Questions," free. Babysitting and refreshments provided. Information: 812-246-2512, ext. 4, or stjohnpaulparish.org.

February 14

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available. Information: SistersofProvidence.org or 812-535-2952. †

Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/retreats.

February 10-12

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Welcoming In-laws**, Valentine retreat for married couples, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **"Who Wrote the Bible?" Bible Study**, 10 a.m. or 6:30 p.m., Conventual Franciscan Father Ken Bartsch presenting, free. Information: cutt.ly/SFCWinterBblstudy23 or 812-23-8817.

Prayers of Jesus: Lessons in Empowering Our Prayers, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Father Steven Schaftlein presenting, \$35. Information, registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Watercolor Class**, 9:30-11:30 a.m.,

third of four stand-alone sessions (Feb. 22), Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen facilitating, participants must provide their own paints, brushes and paper, \$25, 12-person limit. Information, registration: cutt.ly/WCClass2-15-23.

February 16

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40 per day, includes room, continental breakfast, lunch and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$30, dinner additional \$10. Registration: fm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681 or lcoons@archindy.org.

February 17-19

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48,

Bloomington. **Franciscan Christology**, 6:30 p.m. Fri.-11 a.m. Sun., Franciscans of the Immaculate Friar Roderic Burke facilitating, \$50.70 adult, children ages 18 and younger free—must be accompanied by parent, includes lunch and dinner, accommodations additional cost. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, or motheroftheredeemer.com.

February 22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **From Ashes to Resurrection Joy: An Ash Wednesday Day of Reflection**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Benedictine Sister Heather Jean Foltz facilitating, \$75 includes lunch. Information, registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Watercolor Class**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., last of four stand-alone sessions, Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen facilitating, participants must provide their own paints, brushes and paper, \$25, 12-person limit. Information, registration: cutt.ly/WCClass2-22-23.

February 24

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Painting with Padre: Aaron Douglas**, 6-9 p.m., Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen facilitating, supplies and snacks provided, bring beverage to share, 12-person limit, \$40. Information, registration: cutt.ly/paintdouglas23. †

Providence Sisters to host 'Virtual Mini-Retreat on Religious Life' on Feb. 6

The Providence Sisters of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, will host a "Virtual Mini-Retreat on Religious Life" from 7:30 p.m.-8:45 p.m. on Feb. 6.

The retreat is intended for single Catholic women ages 18-42 who are interested in learning more about becoming a religious sister.

During the informal gathering, participants can reflect on what religious life is like in the 21st century as Providence Sister Arrianne

Whittaker, who professed final vows on Aug. 20, 2022, shares about her ministry as a medical doctor and about her life as a Sister of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. There will also be time for questions and answers.

The virtual retreat is free.

For more information or to register, go to MiniRetreat.SistersofProvidence.org or contact Providence Sister Joni Luna at 361-500-9505 or jluna@spsmw.org. †

Sign up for St. Paul School of Evangelization in Greenwood by Feb. 2

The archdiocesan Office of Evangelization is sponsoring a St. Paul School of Evangelization course at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood.

The program involves weekly classes from 7-9 p.m. on Thursdays for four quarters, with eight classes each quarter.

The program is designed to help ordinary Catholics become extraordinary evangelists in their own communities and everyday lives. Classes include time for teaching, discussion, small groups,

activities and prayer.

Classes will be led by Peter Doane, New Evangelization Coordinator at St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Carmel, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese), and the St. Paul Street Evangelization team.

The cost is \$150 per quarter; however, no student is turned away because of an inability to pay. Classes started on Jan. 19, but new registrations will be accepted through Feb. 2.

To learn more about the school and curriculum or to register, go to streetevangelization.com/parish-schools. †

Wedding Anniversaries

FRANCIS AND SHARON (SICKELS) CUNNINGHAM, members of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Jan. 12. The couple was married at the former St. Catherine of Siena Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 12, 1963. They have three children: Amy Longshore and Greg and Mike Cunningham. The couple also has nine grandchildren.



ROBERT AND TERESA (CAMPBELL) HOLLAND, members of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 6. The couple was married at the former St. Francis de Sales Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 6, 1973. They have two children: Matthew and Robert Holland. The couple also has three grandchildren.



Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to cutt.ly/anniversaries or call 317-236-1585.



2023 Catholic Schools Week

A Special Supplement Celebrating the Faith, Excellence and Service of our Catholic Schools



Known as the “Professor of Spacewalking,” Allissa Battocletti Noffke helps train an astronaut in using the tools that are needed during a space mission. (Submitted photo)

The lasting tradition of Catholic schools: Graduates living the faith and changing the world

Editor’s note: The local theme for our Catholic Schools Week Supplement is, “The lasting tradition of Catholic schools: Graduates living the faith and changing the world.”

Throughout this supplement, readers will find the inspiring stories of individuals embracing that theme—a small, yet powerful representation of the countless graduates of our Catholic schools from across the archdiocese and across the generations who share that approach in their life and their faith.

This supplement also includes stories and photographs that capture the joy, faith and successes of current students in our Catholic schools.

There is also information showing that a Catholic education in the archdiocese is affordable for nearly every family who wants that faith-filled educational experience for their child.

We hope you enjoy this salute to the tremendous influence of Catholic education in our archdiocese and in the world.

- The saving of a soldier’s life leads a Navy doctor to live his destiny, page 3B.
- Shaped by his father’s faith and talent, an artist carves out a blessed life, page 7B.
- Can you spell ‘dynasty’? This team defines it, page 8B.
- Students’ time encountering Christ in adoration makes a difference, page 13B.
- How to afford a Catholic school education, page 17B.

‘Professor of Spacewalking’ lives her dream and makes a special space for Christ in her life

By John Shaughnessy

Allissa Battocletti Noffke has one of the coolest nicknames on the face of the Earth.

She is known as the “Professor of Spacewalking,” reflecting her teaching and training of American astronauts in this rare skill at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Beyond the cool nickname, the 35-year-old Indianapolis native also has a view of the universe—thanks to her involvement in the International Space Station—that directly connects to the Catholic faith she first embraced as a student at St. Lawrence School and Bishop Chatard High School, both in Indianapolis.

“I just marvel at God’s creation, creating this whole universe,” she says. “I get to see it through our country’s space program. It leaves me in awe of all the beauty he has given us.”

Battocletti Noffke is also in awe of the incredible journey she has taken that has led her to work at NASA for the past 15 years. It’s a journey that began with a dream she envisioned for herself after a talk with her dad when she was a little girl.

‘I just had a feeling of joy’

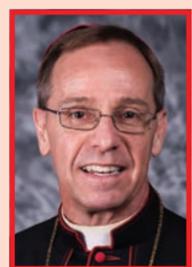
Before she was in the second grade at St. Lawrence, her dad, Tom Battocletti, regaled his daughter with stories of the Apollo

See **SPACEWALKING**, page 2B

‘The core of our schools’ existence is the heart of our faith, namely in Jesus Christ’

Dear Friends in Christ,

Each year, we celebrate Catholic Schools Week throughout the United States. It is a special time for the entire



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

Catholic school community—students, families, staff, faculty and administrators—to showcase the best in our Catholic schools.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis, blessed with 67 Catholic schools throughout central and southern Indiana, has great reason to join in the celebration. The national theme, “Catholic Schools—Faith, Excellence and Service”—touches on three key aspects of what makes our schools so successful and valued. At the core of our schools’

existence is the heart of our faith, namely, in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Thus, the crucifix is displayed prominently throughout our schools, prayer is central to daily life in our schools, Scripture and the catechism are primary components of study, and the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, is most highly prized in our Catholic schools.

Each baptized member—whether student, parent, faculty and/or staff—is called to holiness and mission. Our witness of discipleship in Jesus Christ, through both word and deed, is rooted in faith. Striving to be our best and bring out the best in one another, with a holistic focus on the well-being of each person, the aspiration of excellence permeates every aspect of what it means to be a Catholic school. Such standards of faith and excellence are most efficacious in our service to others, especially the poor and vulnerable.

The theme of this supplement,

“The lasting tradition of Catholic schools: Graduates living the faith and changing the world,” clearly and readily flows from the national focus on faith, excellence and service. Our Catholic schools strive to form and educate disciples of Jesus Christ who embrace the role of faithful citizenship. Worship and service, evangelization and catechesis, contemplation and action, are intricately bound.

Formation and education, according to Catholic teaching, is a lifelong process which involves ongoing conversion. Current students and alumni, embracing their baptismal call, are the greatest ambassadors of our Catholic schools. Called to be missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, we are meant to participate in his mission of transforming the world rather than letting the world get the best of us.

We have much to give thanks for and to celebrate during Catholic Schools

Week and beyond. Let us be especially grateful for all who make our Catholic schools so impactful in the lives of individuals, families and communities—namely, our students, families, alumni, faculty, staffs, administrators, benefactors and volunteers.

I take this opportunity to express deep appreciation for our pastors, grandparents and parish staffs who provide great support for our Catholic schools. Most importantly, we give thanks and praise to the Holy Trinity—God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

With assurance of my prayers and best wishes for everyone celebrating Catholic Schools Week, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Charles C. Thompson

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson



SPACEWALKING

continued from page 1B

space program of the 1960s and how American astronauts landed on the moon during his childhood.

“I thought that was so cool,” she says.

So, when her second-grade teacher asked her and her classmates what they wanted to be when they grew up, she told her teacher she wanted to work for NASA and be an aerospace engineer.

While her dad fueled her dream, her mother Chris—a longtime technology teacher at St. Lawrence—helped contribute to Battocletti Noffke’s ability in the classes she needed to pursue her dream.

“I was fortunate as I was growing up in grade school and high school that I really liked all the science and math classes,” she says. “I loved chemistry at Chatard with Dan McNally, and I also enjoyed my Calculus I class with Elaine Alhand.

“Science and math were my natural strengths, but I will also say that my college degree at Purdue was rigorous and a lot of hard work. I was academically prepared for that, coming out of Chatard—maybe even more so than a lot of my fellow students who didn’t have that strong academic background.”

At the same time, her extracurricular interests at Bishop Chatard—playing clarinet in the band, singing in the choir and performing in musical theater productions—also continued at Purdue where she was a member of the show choir.

Yet even that confidence was challenged when, in her first year at Purdue, she interviewed for a five-year program that let students intern at NASA for half of the academic year and study at the university for the other half.

“I knew if you weren’t accepted, you got a rejection letter. And if you were accepted, you got a phone call. Every

day I checked my mailbox, crossing my fingers. Then one day, I was sitting in my dorm room, and I got the phone call.

“I just had a feeling of joy—and a lot of gratitude and satisfaction that something I had been working for my whole academic career proved fruitful. It was surreal to only be one year out of Chatard and working my dream job.”

‘I love working with the astronauts’

Even after working 15 years at NASA, Battocletti Noffke still talks about her work in the space program with enthusiasm and joy—the mark of a job that is still a dream.

As part of the Human Spaceflight Operations team at NASA, she is officially an astronaut instructor and flight controller who leads on-orbit operations for the United States’ extra-vehicular activities on the International Space Station. She also works with Mission Control when American astronauts are in space.

As impressive as these titles and duties are, they’re not exactly as catchy and memorable as “Professor of Spacewalking.”

“Whenever there are astronauts doing space walks, my group is the one that does all the planning and the training for them. I really like working to plan space walks in real time. I’m the operation lead for U.S. space walks on the International Space Station. I’m very involved in



Allissa Battocletti Noffke poses for a photo at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, where she helps train astronauts in the skill of spacewalking. (Submitted photo)

putting a plan and a schedule together. It takes about a month to get ready for a spacewalk.”

Training astronauts for their spacewalks revolves around two basic details, she says.

“The first thing is how to work when they’re in their space suits, which are bulky. Secondly, we train them in how to use a lot of hand tools, which are bulky, too. Trying to work in your bulky suit using bulky tools is challenging.”

For her, the work is also rewarding.

“I love working with the astronauts. It’s very fulfilling to become friends with them and help them. It’s really cool to see someone going from their initial training and not knowing anything, to performing on spacewalks. I specifically teach them everything they know about spacewalking.”

She had to make that journey herself, as she spent the first three years at NASA learning about all the details involved in spacewalking.

“I just really fell in love with spacewalking and all the crew on the ground involved in it—being part of the team that supports our astronauts in space.”

Through it all, she’s also relied on a different foundation of support—her faith and her relationship with God.

Creating space for Christ in her life

“When I first moved to Houston and I didn’t know anyone, one of the first things I did was find a parish to attend Mass.

That was comforting in a lot of ways—to be away from home and to still have the same Mass that I could participate in. That was very important.

“One of the things I really appreciate about my Catholic education is how it put Christ at the forefront of our lives every day. I’m so thankful for that. We had Mass, we had religion classes and we started every class with prayer. And that emphasized to me that Christ is the most important part of life. I still live that very much today.”

She continues to count on that relationship with Christ as her life leads her into the unknown in two ways, one professional and one personal.

The professional part includes the plan of NASA to return to a landing on the moon—the landing that first led Battocletti Noffke to dream of working for NASA.

“We’re hoping for some time in the mid-2020s,” she says. “As long as there are humans in space, there will be spacewalking. We’re always trying to upgrade it. And getting back to walking on the moon is really exciting.”

So is the personal adventure that she and her husband Matthew are awaiting as their first child is due to enter the world on July 1.

“It’s really exciting to think about having a relationship with my own child and helping my child have a relationship with Christ—just as my parents did with me.” †

“One of the things I really appreciate about my Catholic education is how it put Christ at the forefront of our lives every day. I’m so thankful for that. We had Mass, we had religion classes and we started every class with prayer. And that emphasized to me that Christ is the most important part of life. I still live that very much today.”

—Allissa Battocletti Noffke



The teachings of the Church guide our Catholic schools

By Brian Disney

Superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese

The Catholic Schools Week Supplement in this issue of *The Criterion* focuses on Catholic school alumni who are living our faith and changing the world.



Brian Disney

Catholic schools have a long and successful tradition of developing leaders across the globe. Our alumni are leaders in government, education, business, social services, sports, the Church and many more areas.

Currently, 62 million students worldwide and more than 20,000 students in the archdiocese are attending Catholic schools in pre-kindergarten, elementary and secondary schools. What separates our Catholic schools from

other private and public schools? Our schools are guided by Church teaching.

“The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for the education in the faith” (*The Catholic School*, #9). Our Catholic schools are first and foremost a community of faith. Every Catholic school in the archdiocese has a prominently displayed sign which states, “Christ is the reason for this school.”

Catholic school education constantly refers to the Gospel and offers frequent encounters with Christ through prayer, the sacraments and the school community. Our students gradually mature in their faith to become Christian men and women who live and act in conformity with the Gospel. They learn to integrate their faith with their lived experiences. Catholic school students learn to discern the voice of God to serve others and make the world a better place. They become Christian disciples who live their faith and show non-Christians something of the mystery of Christ.

Catholic schools greatly value partnerships with parents, the primary teachers of their children. This parent-school relationship in our Catholic school communities is uniquely supportive and collaborative. “It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children ... teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard” (*Code of Canon Law*, #796). Parents and educators are called to work closely together in the education of our children.

This education is more than ensuring our students are academically prepared to be productive contributors to our country and world. A Catholic school education “must strive for complete formation of the human person ... that they are able to develop their physical, moral and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life” (*Code of Canon Law*, #795).

Our Catholic schools strive to exceed

the academic rigor and performance of other schools. In addition to strong academics, formation of the whole child includes opportunities to serve others, grow in community and be leaders. Our Catholic school students are preparing to build the kingdom of God on Earth and to live eternally in God’s heavenly kingdom.

As you read about our alumni in this Catholic Schools Week Supplement, notice the impact of the Catholic school community built on the foundation of Christ. See the impact of the parents and educators closely collaborating. Recognize the impact of the education of the whole child. Identify how Church teachings guide our Catholic schools to greatness.

To enroll your child, to support our Catholic schools financially, to volunteer, to seek employment or to learn more about Catholic school education in the archdiocese, contact your local school or visit the Office of Catholic Schools webpage (ocs.archindy.org).

God bless our Catholic schools! †



The saving of a soldier's life leads a Navy doctor to live his destiny

By John Shaughnessy

When John Kennedy shares his journey to becoming a senior medical officer in the U.S. Navy, one of the crucial turning points came before he was even born—when his grandfather was struggling to live after being wounded in the Korean War.

“My grandfather served in the Army, and the only way he was able to survive his wounds was because of a military physician,” says 29-year-old Kennedy about his grandfather, Jerry Kennedy. “So I feel responsible to give back for him getting that second chance of life. That’s the only reason my dad exists, and I, my brother and my sister exist.”

Lt. Kennedy not only grew up with that story, he grew up in a family where his parents—John and Maria Kennedy—served in the Navy. His education at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Indianapolis also influenced the direction of his life and his path to becoming a doctor.

“Our Lady of Lourdes introduced me to the medical field and created a stable group of friends for me,” he says. “I met my best friends in Boy Scouts. One of the dads was a trauma orthopedic surgeon, Dr. David Brokaw. When I was in the seventh grade, I went to soccer practice and ended up breaking my leg. I went to Dr. Brokaw to get it fixed. And I thought, ‘I’d love to do this.’ After that, everything I did was geared toward becoming a physician.”

That dream and the influence of Catholic education continued at

Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis.

“Scecina set me up for success, to be totally honest,” says the 2012 graduate who ran track and cross country during his time there. “It really did in so many ways. Scecina also taught me about balancing sports and academics.”

He also appreciated Scecina’s Franciscan influence so much that he wanted to continue it by getting his medical degree at the Marian University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Indianapolis, graduating in 2021.

He now serves as the senior medical officer for the USS Gunston Hall, which has included being deployed in the Baltic Sea for three months.

“My job was essentially to oversee the care of about 800 U.S. sailors and Marines while they were on deployment. I acted as a primary care physician and an emergency medical provider. I was the only one for all 800.”

Now he is stationed at the U.S. Navy Base in Norfolk, Va. It’s a family commitment to the Navy that he shares with his younger brother, Michael Kennedy, an F18 naval flight officer in the *Top Gun* tradition.

“It’s nice to have someone to talk to about what’s going on in current events and how that affects our mission and our readiness,” John Kennedy says. “My brother and I are very close.”

Kennedy also relies on the support of his wife, Mary Kathryn (Allen) Kennedy, a 2009 graduate of St. Barnabas School and a 2013 graduate of Roncalli High School, both in Indianapolis.

“I had a crush on her for about seven years,” Kennedy says. “We were set up on our first date by my aunt and her mom. She’s awesome. I couldn’t do the things I do and be who I am without her.”

They have two daughters, 3-year-old Mary Eileen and 1-year-old Vivian. As parents, they also strive to share the values and the faith that were so much a part of their Catholic education.

“My wife and I are both practicing Catholics,” he says. “We place a large emphasis on our faith in teaching our daughters. Our faith has kept us strong, especially during my deployment. It’s really nice to be able to fall back on our Catholic faith.”

It has helped lead him to the life he has

always believed he was destined to have.

“I absolutely love my job. If I re-did my life, I wouldn’t change a darn thing.” †



As a senior medical officer in the U.S. Navy, John Kennedy has overseen the care of about 800 U.S. sailors and Marines while being deployed in the Baltic Sea. Here, he shares a photo with his wife, Mary Kathryn (Allen) Kennedy and their two daughters, Vivian and Mary Eileen. (Submitted photo)

A life changes through the love of God and the touch of angels in human form

By John Shaughnessy

Rolanda Hardin believes there are moments in a young person’s life that are shaped by the love of God and the touch of angels in human form.

She embraces that belief because she has lived that reality, starting with a life-changing choice when she was a little girl.

In the era of busing in Indianapolis in the 1970s, her grandfather and her mother decided that instead of sending her to a county public school far from her eastside home, they would send

the Baptist-raised child to the nearest school in the neighborhood—St. Andrew Catholic School.

Now 52, Hardin shares all the ways that choice has made a difference in her life.

“My three best girlfriends to this day came from there. I’m still friends with some of my teachers. Even the guy I’m dating now was in the first grade with me.”

As much as those realities delight her, she says the biggest impact of her education at St. Andrew is that it led her on a path to the Catholic faith—a foundation she has used to help shape the lives of many children

and young people, including her current role as the coordinator of the 21st Century Scholars program at Marian University in Indianapolis.

“My sixth-grade teacher—Providence Sister Elizabeth Cecile Gardner—and our pastor, Father James Farrell, were very integral in my life. For Sister Elizabeth, it all started with the word ‘service.’ It was all about taking care of your community, giving back to your community. We would visit nursing homes. At Christmas, we took toys and clothes and trees to people in need.”

She also loved participating in the school Masses celebrated by Father Farrell.

“I loved how it was

very ritualistic. It taught me how to pray, and it taught me the importance of the sacraments. All of it was my foundation.”

That foundation continued in her education at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.

“It was fabulous,” she says about her high school experience. “I went there with about 10 of my friends from St. Andrew, and we remained friends there. Father [Patrick] Kelly was a very big part of my Cathedral experience. He was the principal. He was really big about making faith as important as everything else. He really made you believe in Cathedral being a family and an extension of my family. He was there for me after graduation, too. He officiated at my grandfather’s funeral.”

Four years after she graduated from Cathedral in 1988, she embraced the choice that she had first thought about making as a student at St. Andrew. She entered into full communion with the Church at St. Andrew Parish in 1992.

“It was a full-circle moment,” says Hardin, who is still a member of St. Andrew 30 years later. “It just felt like the right thing to do.”

So did the emphasis on making a difference in the lives of others that she learned at St. Andrew and Cathedral.

Hardin was a special education teacher for 20 years before becoming the coordinator of Indiana’s 21st Century Scholars program at Marian in 2020.

The state-funded program is designed to make college more affordable. Eligible students who meet requirements that start in the eighth grade receive a two- or four-year scholarship that pays up to 100% tuition at an eligible Indiana college or university.

“It’s all about keeping our most valuable resources—our young people—here in Indiana,” she says. “I still get to help people in our neighborhoods, our communities. I work alongside the students. I’m there to support them academically and connect them to the resources on the campus.”

“I also teach a first-year seminar to some of the freshman students. We get to talk about Franciscan values and the legacy of Marian. Of course, we’re accepting of all faiths. I try to find the commonalities between us instead of the differences.”

Hardin often sees herself at that age in the students she helps. She also tries to emulate Sister Elizabeth in the way she tries to help them.

“The fun thing about being on a college campus and working with these students is they need some coaching, mentoring and support to be all they can be. To know that you’re supporting them and that you are part of their legacy, that’s important to me.”

“For me, it always goes back to the foundations of my Catholic education—the principles of being good to people, being kind to people, and that education is the foundation for life. I really think the very core of being a Catholic school student is that a simple act of kindness goes a long way.”

In living that focus, she has seen how it has shaped her relationship with God.

“It draws me closer to him. Every day before I put my feet on the floor, I ask him to order my steps, to order my day.”

“May the lives I come into contact with, may they see God through me. May I be an extension of him in human form.” †



As the smiles of some of her students at Marian University in Indianapolis show, Rolanda Hardin, forefront, has always had a way of sharing joy and kindness with young people. (Submitted photo)



Teacher lives her dream—and shares her faith and mutual roots—with her students

By John Shaughnessy

When Mia Rojas was in kindergarten, her dream of becoming a teacher was so joyful and consuming that she created a classroom in her family’s basement, complete with real desks, a white board and schoolbooks.

Years later, Rojas had another dream that filled her with hope and joy when she graduated from college in 2021 with degrees in elementary education and special education.

That dream dramatically influenced her decision to choose to become a first-grade teacher at St. Michael-St. Gabriel Archangels School in Indianapolis after she had received job offers from several schools.

“I knew I wanted to teach at St. Michael-St. Gabriel because when I went there for an interview and a tour, I could tell they had a good, strong community. I’m also Mexican-American, and I knew they had a strong Hispanic population. There’s not a lot of Latino teachers in the United States, so it’s important for me to be in a place where students can see someone who looks like them.

“I am fluent in their culture. I really like to make connections with the students and their culture, and they like that. It makes them feel they’re seen and represented.”

Now 24, Rojas knew that feeling of connection with her teachers when she was a student at Holy Name of Jesus School in Beech Grove and at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

“I’ve had so many great teachers throughout my life who loved their jobs, their schools and their faith. Being a student in Catholic schools, you feel a sense of a great community. I knew that if I taught in a Catholic school, it would be a close-knit community.

“Being in Catholic schools also helped me grow in my faith. And there were the life lessons you learned. You could learn about reading and writing and math, and the teachers would connect it to our faith and how to live.”

Similar to many educators, Rojas quickly calls to mind the teachers who inspired and influenced her as a child. That group includes her aunt, Gina Fleming, the former superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese. It also includes her first-grade teacher at Holy Name—Ellen Taylor.

“You could just tell how passionate they were about what they were doing and how much they loved us. When Mrs. Taylor heard that I was teaching first grade at St. Michael-St. Gabriel, she sent me a message saying it was really exciting and emotional for her, knowing that one of her students was teaching first grade in a Catholic school.”

Rojas strives to bring that same combination of excitement, passion and caring to her students.

“They’re very sweet. They love school, they love their teachers, and they’re a fun age to be around. They’re excited about learning, and they get excited about every little thing.”

She is equally thrilled about the opportunity to share the Catholic faith



Mia Rojas always strives to celebrate the qualities and gifts of her first-grade students at St. Michael-St. Gabriel Archangels School in Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

with her first-graders and the second-grade students she teaches about the sacraments, helping to prepare them for reconciliation and their first Communion.

“I teach them to use kind words, to think about what Jesus would want them to do, to live by the Golden Rule. Every day while I’m teaching them, I always tell them it’s important to have a relationship with God, and a good way to

keep our faith strong is to pray. It’s a good reminder to me as well.

“I try to be positive and happy for them so that rubs off on them in how they act at school and at home.”

The joy just flows from Rojas as she talks about teaching, connecting and sharing the faith with her students.

It’s the joy that comes from living her dream. †

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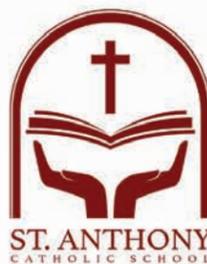


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From the darkness he has known, Etling strives to be a light for people in need

By John Shaughnessy

The words hit home for John Etling. “I read something recently that said, ‘God is more present in the darkest moments,’” Etling says. “Those words give me comfort because we all have our dark moments.”



John Etling

Etling has experienced tough times at different points in his own life, including suffering a heart attack about six months ago. Yet as he works to strengthen and rehabilitate his heart, the 63-year-old father of five also pours it out for others as he continues to lead Catholic Charities Terre Haute, the archdiocesan agency that strives to give hope and dignity to people in western Indiana in need of food, shelter, job training and counseling.

“It’s a sense of knowing that we meet people at some of the toughest moments in their lives—and there’s a chance to help them turn their lives around,” says Etling, who has led the agency since 2005.

“There are a lot of people hurting in this society. The people we help often have no place else to turn. We’re just trying to play some role in putting their lives back together. One of our volunteers said it would be dire to think of our community without having Catholic Charities here.”

This year marks the 50th one that Catholic Charities Terre Haute has served this part of the archdiocese. In many ways, the agency has been a family affair as Etling’s father—the late John E. Etling—helped start it. And Etling’s mother Patricia worked alongside her husband for years.

As the second of their 10 children

and the oldest son, Etling first became involved in the agency as a volunteer, wanting to please his parents. Now he is part of the family legacy that has always had the Catholic faith as its foundation.

“If it wasn’t for my faith, I wouldn’t know where I’d be,” he says. “I’ve always felt I’ve been blessed to be given at my birth a loving family, my mom and dad and my Catholic faith. It’s carried me through a lot of tough times.”

“My faith hasn’t always answered my questions about those times, but it’s reminded me I have a purpose in life. I feel better about my life that I’m trying to help people who are struggling in ways I’m not struggling.”

Besides his family, he credits the development of his faith to his eight years as a student at St. Patrick School in Terre Haute—where he graduated in 1974—and his two years at the former Archbishop Paul C. Schulte High School in Terre Haute.

“It felt like a family environment. There was a strong sense of belonging,” Etling says about his Catholic education. “It was a caring, nurturing environment and a healthy dose of structure. Certain conduct was expected, and there certainly was the presence of religion. I was an altar boy. That was a privilege for me.”

“I think a lot about those innocent years now. It allowed me to focus on the most important things—just to realize what we can offer the world in return. There is probably a connection to what I do now.”

His work has helped lead him to a deeper relationship with God.

“I’m probably as involved in my faith as I’ve ever been in my life. I feel I’m in a very healthy place in my relationship with God these days. I have a lot of gratitude and awe for his love of me, for his love of all of us. Because I know how flawed I am and how loved I am by him. I feel like I’m his son, and he’s my father. Maybe



As the agency director of Catholic Charities Terre Haute, John Etling, left, has always been hands-on in bringing food, hope and dignity to people in need. (Submitted photo)

that’s what drives me. I’m trying to earn his acceptance.”

He’s also striving for a goal that he considers the essence of his eight years of education at St. Patrick School.

“Part of what I learned at St. Pat’s is that our goal is to get to heaven and to bring as many people with us as we can. To do that, we have to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and our Savior. Our mission is to strive to become saints. I’m nowhere near that, but imagine what the world would be like if more of us followed that blueprint.

“I think the biggest satisfaction we can have is helping somebody else, whether it’s someone in our family or someone we’ve never met before. The most significant thing I got out of my years of Catholic education is there is no substitute for being of service to others.”

He thinks again of his life in the context of those words about God being more present in our darkest moments.

“I’ve been knocked down, and I keep getting back up. I’ve been blessed in this world, and I want to pay it forward.” †

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School retreats pave the path for a youth to find his future as a priest

By John Shaughnessy

When Father Kyle Rodden went on his first overnight retreat in the eighth grade, he especially looked forward to one part of it.

That was the opportunity to have the equivalent of a rare sleepover with his friends from Most Sacred Heart of Jesus School in Jeffersonville—to have fun with them through the night and into the morning.

Yet in the midst of all that fun came a revelation.

It happened as he and his friends participated in the retreat's small groups, groups that were led by high school students whom he had long admired—neighbors and older siblings of his friends.

“They were sharing their faith,” Father Rodden recalls. “They were talking about their prayer life, their relationship with God, about how much their faith meant to them. They showed me that it was something you could take seriously and be cool. It wasn’t just for un-cool kids.”

“That retreat flipped a switch for me. I lost a lot of the sense that I needed to be closeted about my faith. I may be the only one in the deanery thinking about the priesthood, but I thought it was cool, and my friends thought it was cool. I can practice my faith. I can go to daily Mass. It’s cool, and other people who are doing it are cool.”

Four years later, he had another life-changing experience during his senior

retreat at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville.

“The retreat provided a space where people shared a whole lot about their families,” recalls Father Rodden, a 2007 graduate of Providence. “I saw these guys every day, and I had no idea of the kinds of burdens they were facing throughout their lives. My heart wanted to reach out to everybody who was sharing these difficult things.”

“I also had an increase in gratitude for the blessings of my life—and a real desire to not take those things for granted. I was like the Grinch. My heart grew three times that day. I wanted others to know the love of Jesus, the love of God for them, that there is a life of meaning for them in the Church, and I wanted to give my life to that.”

Those two retreat experiences were landmark moments on his path to being ordained a priest in the archdiocese in 2016. He now serves as the pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon and St. Mary Parish in Lanesville.

As part of his ministry, Father Rodden strives to use the knowledge he has gained and the gifts he’s been given by God to help the students at St. Joseph School to grow in their faith. The school’s principal, Britney King, sees the difference he has made.

“Our school is blessed to have a parish priest devoted to the faith and Catholic education,” King says. “Since his arrival three years ago, our students have experienced many rich liturgical



Father Kyle Rodden shows his delight in sharing time and joy with some children at St. Joseph Catholic School in Corydon, where he makes it his mission to bring students closer to God and the Catholic faith. (Submitted photo)

traditions—the Liturgy of the Hours four days a week, Mass, rosary for vocations, eucharistic adoration, Benediction and reconciliation.

“When all of these experiences are paired with Father Kyle’s genuine love for the Catholic faith, we have witnessed our students deepening their relationship with Christ.”

That’s the one great hope that Father

Rodden has for the children.

“At the end of the day, the questions I’m asking are, ‘Do these children know Jesus in the Eucharist? Do they know he’s there for them? Have they grown in love for him?’

“What I’m really dying to hear from the kids is, ‘Jesus is really there in the Blessed Sacrament, and I love him.’ We’re planting the seeds for that to happen.” †

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Shaped by his father's faith and talent, artist carves out a blessed life

By John Shaughnessy

Eighteen years after the death of his father, Tim Weberding still holds the lessons and legacy of William J. Weberding at the center of his life.

Tim still remembers the lessons his father gave him that led him to become a master woodcarver, including the tough times when his dad gently told him that he needed to start a piece over again.

"My dad was an excellent teacher. He was my mentor," Tim says. "He worked with me his entire life until he passed away. That was 2005."

Tim also recalls how his father started the family business that has endured for more than 80 years in Batesville. The business began in 1942 in a "little, bitty workshop" with his dad taking orders for statues and religious carvings from priests in the area, and it's grown into a company that has earned a glowing reputation for its works of art and its restoration efforts that have blessed many parishes across the archdiocese and even the country.

It's all part of the legacy that his father and his mother Monica carved into reality for their five children—a legacy that not only shaped the lives of William G., Terry, Mary Anne, Shirley and Tim, but also the lives of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It's a legacy of faith and Catholic education that has its roots in the church and the school of St. Louis Parish in Batesville.

Tim's parents first met in St. Louis School, and it's where they sent their children to receive their Catholic

education. It's also where their children sent their children. And the connection continues as five of Tim's seven grandchildren now attend the school.

"My mom and dad were very religious," Tim says. "We were brought up that way. It made us close. It all goes back to our mom and dad."

"The school is just a good school. Back when I went there, we went to Mass every day. And there were nuns. It's personal there. The education is good. The religion is good, and they come out as good children."

Tim also has a fondness for St. Louis School because his wife Marilyn also attended the school. She is also a graduate of Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg. They will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in June.

"I still help with bingo once a month to support the school," Tim says. "I love it. I get to see the older people."

At 68, he also comes to the school occasionally to help teach the children about carving. Near Halloween in 2022, he led a fun project for the eighth-grade students who are preparing to receive the sacrament of confirmation.

"They worked to carve their chosen saint's name into a pumpkin," Tim says. "That was fun for them and fun for me."

Joy, challenge, pride and attention to detail have marked Tim's career as a master woodcarver, a profession and a passion of his for 50 years. As he nears retirement in February, he looks forward to the family business being continued by



From a foundation of artistry and precision, Tim Weberding has crafted a career as a master woodcarver for 50 years. (Submitted photo)

a nephew and the nephew's son.

Tim also looks back on some of his favorite projects of the company through the years, including re-creating the beautifully ornate partition wall behind the altar of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis after a fire gutted the church in 2001.

And his last major project before retirement has been creating a 10-foot-tall carving of the Holy Family that's in honor of his late parents.

With each of the wood carvings he has

made, Tim remembers the wisdom that his father gave him about inspiration—how God, and the world that God has created, can help an artist tap into inspiration and creativity.

"When you do carving, art work, painting or anything like that, you're always going to have a dry spell," Tim says. "When that happened, my dad always said, 'Go outside, take a walk, clear your head, and it will come to you. You always get help along the way.'"

"Some of the things your father tells you stick with you." †

Doing 'the next right thing'—with the help of a blowtorch—motivates mentor

By John Shaughnessy

Dave Ungru's approach to life flows from the belief that God gives all of us gifts—and our responsibility is to keep



Dave Ungru

developing our gifts and using them to help others.

"God wants us to keep growing every day," says the member of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison. "My main focus anymore is to try to do the best I possibly can—the next right thing."

For Ungru, that approach has meant

trying to have an impact on the lives of high school students whose future may not include college.

Not graduating from college didn't stop Ungru from being a successful business owner in the welding industry, operating a company in Madison that provides supplies to customers in Canada, Mexico and several states in the United States, including Indiana.

While the 67-year-old Ungru has turned over the daily operations of the business to two of his three grown sons, he has helped create welding and industrial arts programs at Ivy Tech Community College in Madison that have provided opportunities for students at nearby Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School.

Shawe and Pope John XXIII Elementary School were where Ungru wanted his three sons—Brad, Doug and Todd—to have the same faith-based education that he received as a child growing up in northern Kentucky. At the two schools, the priests and the religious sisters instilled in him the belief that God comes first, and one way to honor him is to use the personal gifts he has given.

Ungru is convinced he's doing just that for some Shawe students.

"My whole thing is to focus on the kids who aren't going to college," he says. "I wanted to show them something that was possible, something they could be passionate about, something that would let them make a living. The kids who stay with it are getting employed,

and they're accelerating in their careers."

As part of his effort, Ungru covers the costs of all the protective equipment that the welding students need for the program.

"There are six kids involved now," he says. "It gives them a chance to try this in high school. If they don't like it, that's fine. But 70% are now staying in the field. My biggest reward is that when these kids get out of school, they will still reach out to me."

"For me, it's all about their success. It's all about trying to make everybody better. God gives you gifts so try to take advantage of the gifts he's given you. When you make mistakes, try to improve upon them. That's the way I live my life." †

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Knowing how people's support changed her life, young nurse strives to do the same

By John Shaughnessy

As 23-year-old Maggie Westjohn talks about her life, two themes echo through a conversation with her—the importance of having people who support you at every turn, and the gift of providing support to people in their time of need.

“We all go through times that we’re not fully prepared to handle. We are all weak at times,” says Westjohn, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond. “I’ve needed that support at times. Having the support system that I’ve had and being able to be that support for other people is just incredible.”

Westjohn makes an impact on people’s lives as a nurse at Reid Memorial Hospital in Richmond. She also views what she does as a reflection of all the guidance and support she received during her education in the Seton Catholic Schools in Richmond, from pre-school through her high school graduation in 2017.

“I had a lot of support from my family and my teachers living their faith. When I played sports in high school, it was rare when the teachers weren’t at our games, even though most of them were away games, and most of the teachers had families that kept them busy, too,” says Westjohn who played volleyball, basketball and softball at Seton Catholic High School.

“There was so much support from everyone. I felt I could walk into anyone’s office, and they would help me in any way they could.”

She has continued to feel that support even after she graduated from college.

“I did not go to a Catholic college, and I fell away from my faith for a while,” she recalls. “Now, I’m back. When I go to church now, I see my teachers there. I go to church functions, and I see my teachers there. Being in that environment models for me how my faith is a huge part of my life and how I need to share my faith.

“I’ve found a great family of friends in my church. We’ve started a young adult ministry. Some of the people involved in that are my best friends. We share something huge in our lives. They have a drive to be a good, Christian person.”

So does Westjohn. That drive has motivated her in her work at Reid Memorial Hospital, where part of her experience has involved working on a psychiatric unit.

“There’s such a difference from when they first come in and when they leave,” she says. “It’s very rewarding to see that change and that difference—to help people get back on track.

“I’ve been in many situations that have challenged me, but I’ve always felt so at home with my work family. I’m a young nurse, very early in my career. It’s fantastic that we have such a great work family.”

She also finds herself relying on God in her work, in her life.

“I feel like I pray a lot at work,” she says. “I pray to God for strength for



Maggie Westjohn takes a break from her work as a nurse at Reid Memorial Hospital in Richmond. She views her career choice as a reflection of all the guidance and support she received during her education in the Seton Catholic Schools in Richmond. (Submitted photo)

myself as well as for my patients and our staff. Hospitals aren’t places where people like to be, but we want to provide the best

care for each individual. It’s extremely important to show other people the support you have for them.” †



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Can you spell ‘dynasty’? This team defines it

By John Shaughnessy

In any given year, the Catholic high schools in the archdiocese always compete for—and often win—state championships.

In this school year, Lily Cridge of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis won her second consecutive state championship in girls’ cross country.

The boys’ soccer team of Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis earned its second straight championship in Indiana’s Class 2A tournament while the girls’ volleyball team of Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville claimed the Class 3A state championship.

And Bishop Chatard’s football team captured the Class 3A state championship.

Then there is the team that won its third consecutive Indiana State Class 2 Championship—the Spell Bowl team of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

Can you spell “dynasty”?

Actually, spelling “dynasty” wouldn’t be any kind of challenge for the Roncalli Spell Bowl team members, especially considering some of the daunting words they faced this year:

nosocomophobia
gochujang
lachrymal
phosphatidyl
Oberammergau

roentgenium
quixotically
Fontainebleau

Once your head stops spinning, consider that eight of the 10 spellers on the Roncalli team had perfect scores in the state championship.

“The competition involves a team of 10 spellers,” explains Jennifer Schonfeld, Roncalli’s Spell Bowl coach. “Each speller goes up to the stage individually and spells—writes down—nine words during their round. The announcer gives the word, a sentence using the word, and then 10 additional seconds to write the correct spelling. The overall score is a team effort—10 spellers with nine rounds for a total of 90 correct words possible.”

All in all, the Roncalli team spelled 85 of its 90 words correctly.

“I was blown away by how well they did,” Schonfeld says. “This is truly the best score our team has ever gotten, and I was very impressed that a whopping eight spellers had perfect rounds. I couldn’t be more proud of their hard work and dedication. Everyone on the team lifted each other up. They really do a great job of supporting one another.

“It’s a joy to coach them every year and get to know the kids outside of class. I’m honored to share this accomplishment with them.” †



Members of the Spell Bowl team of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis are all smiles as they celebrate the school’s third consecutive Indiana State Class 2 Championship. (Submitted photo)



Friendships, faith and family have shaped a senior's memorable education

By John Shaughnessy

The everyday joys stand out to Nathan Julius, like spending time with the core group of friends he has known since pre-school at Holy Family School in New Albany.

Then there are the special moments that the 18-year-old senior at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville will never forget:

Being on the field when the school's baseball team won a state championship in his sophomore year.

Being there when his sister Abby, a current sophomore, and her teammates won a state championship in volleyball this past fall.

He also talks enthusiastically about his parents and the teachers at both schools who have helped form him as a person of faith.

And the more that Nathan shares about his experience in Catholic education, the more it becomes clear just how meaningful it is to him.

"The teachers and the atmosphere here at Providence are very special," says Nathan, a member of the National Honor Society and a student ambassador. "The coolest part for me is the friendships I've made here. I came in with a lot of friends from Holy Family, but I've met a lot of good friends from the other parishes.

"And it's really cool to see how many people are invested in the school. There are so many people who show up at

sporting events who support us."

He also notes how his teachers at Holy Family still make a point of connecting with him and supporting him, too. Part of that support from both Holy Family and Providence has been helping him to grow in his faith.

"Both schools have benefitted my faith," says Nathan, the son of Brian and Michelle Julius. "Just having a religion class regularly has taught me a lot about the history of my faith. And I like that Mass and confession are available here. It keeps me active in my faith.

"There's always the reminder that God is always with me. That's motivated me to stay in my faith."

He's looking forward to his last semester at Providence, including one more baseball season that he hopes will end with another state championship and



As Nathan Julius looks back on his four years at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville, one of his favorite memories is knowing that he and his sister Abby are both members of teams that won state championships. Nathan was part of the Providence baseball team that won a state championship in 2021, while Abby was part of the school's girls' volleyball team that became state champs in 2022. (Submitted photo)

the feeling he had when that game ended. "All the excitement and emotion just raced through my body. It was an incredible experience."

He has the same feeling about his years at Holy Family and Providence. "They've been great. I can't imagine myself anywhere else." †

From heartbreak to the dream of helping others, a senior cherishes her Catholic education

By John Shaughnessy

When we lose someone we love, we naturally remember the time we shared with them and the qualities that defined them.



Stella Campbell

When we lose someone we love, we also never forget the people who comforted us during that time, who came through for us.

Two years ago, when Stella Campbell was a sophomore at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, she lived the heartbreak of losing her dad, Tom Campbell, one month after he was diagnosed with cancer.

It's a heartbreak she shared with her brother Harley, an eighth-grade student at the school at that time, and their mother Cheryl, who was part of the cafeteria team at the school then.

Now as a senior, Stella looks back on that time of heartbreak with a lasting fondness and a deep appreciation for the way the Cardinal Ritter community responded to her family. Indeed, it was the first thing she mentioned when she was asked about the impact of her Catholic education on her life.

"One of the main things we have here is the support system," Stella says. "We ended up losing my dad when I was a sophomore. We had found out he had cancer a month earlier, and then he had COVID. It happened so quickly that it was hard to take in. All the teachers checked in on me and my brother. And my mother's friends were there for her.

"It means a lot to me to have that support system. There's always someone to talk to. And my brother and I both have a great group of friends. It's nice to have that sense of community and faith bringing all of us together."

That community of faith has also given Stella a foundation—and an opportunity—to develop her gifts and also to discover new ones. She has played volleyball, basketball and softball for the school all four years. She is also vice-president of the school's pro-life club, making trips the past two years to Washington for the national March for Life.

"It was really cool to see how many people were there," says Stella, who joined the school's pro-life

club after she was horrified when she saw a news report showing what happens to a child during an abortion. "It was very much a peaceful march, which was great to be a part of."

Now 17, Stella is also involved in Cardinal Ritter's campus ministry and service team, which led to one of her favorite service projects earlier in this school year.

"Me and one of my volleyball teammates set up a plan for our team to help the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Ten of us went to the food pantry, and 10 of us went to the clothing distribution center. It was great to be the ones planning it and setting it up."

As with many students in Catholic high schools, Stella represents the reality of how much they do and how much they accomplish in their school careers.

"It's taken a lot of time management skills," she says. "I learned how to manage my time with sports. I also wanted to be involved with the rest of the student body, not just the athletes. You find the time for what's important to you."

For Stella, that priority list all starts with her relationship with God, a relationship that started during her elementary school years at St. Christopher School in Indianapolis.

"My faith is the most important thing in my life. Even at a young age at St. Christopher, we had a focus on religion each day and Mass once or twice a week. By the time we were in the sixth grade, we



Being part of a team has always been an important part of the high school experience for Stella Campbell, second from right, front row. Here, she shares a moment of fun with basketball teammates at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

were having deep discussions about God, which have continued at Ritter. I've been reading the Bible a lot more now. I think my relationship with God is really good."

So are the plans she has for her future. Among the top five of her senior class academically, Stella has wanted to be a neurologist since the seventh grade.

"The brain has always fascinated me. I want to learn more about it so I could be a doctor and help people."

As she looks back upon her years at St. Christopher and Cardinal Ritter, Stella does it with gratitude for the many people who have befriended her and helped to form her. Most of all, her thanks begin and end with her mother and her father.

"My father went to a public school. I'm grateful that they both agreed for my brother and I to continue our education at a Catholic school, which is amazing." †



Celebrating the Joy, Faith and Hope of a Catholic Education





Two Catholic schools earn Blue Ribbon distinction, adding to archdiocese's outstanding tradition

By John Shaughnessy

After they learned the great news, the students of Christ the King School in Indianapolis danced in their classrooms as the loudspeaker played "Celebration" by Kool & The Gang.

The celebration was also on at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis where students greeted their community's great news with cheers and high-fives.

Both celebrations were in reaction to the two schools adding to the outstanding academic tradition of Catholic education in the archdiocese as they were recognized earlier in this school year as national Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education.

The recognition extended the archdiocese's success concerning this national award. Catholic schools in the archdiocese have received 37 Blue Ribbon School honors since the program started in 1982.

"We are extremely excited that Christ the King Catholic School and Cathedral High School have been recognized for their exemplary academic performance," said Brian Disney, superintendent of the 67 Catholic schools in the archdiocese. "Both schools provide excellent faith formation and academics in addition to extra- and co-curricular activities."

The education that's provided at the two schools also reflects the emphasis of Catholic education in schools across

the archdiocese, according to the superintendent.

"The education of the whole child is a partnership between students, parents—the first teachers—schools and the Church," Disney noted.

Christ the King and Cathedral were two of three Catholic schools among the 10 schools in Indiana that received the national award. Only 297 schools in the country received the distinction, including just 24 non-public schools.

Both Christ the King and Cathedral were recognized as "exemplary, high-performing schools."

"I am so proud and happy for my students, staff, parents and parish," said Ed Seib, principal of Christ the King. "Many parents and parishioners have reached out to congratulate the staff. Our former pastor, Father Todd Riebe, was one of the first to reach out. I have been quick to thank them, but also congratulate them as well. This is an honor we earned together."

In its application to be considered for the honor, Christ the King not only highlighted its academics but also how the school stressed the "spiritual, social and emotional health of our students."

Cathedral administrators noted that this year's honor marks the fourth time the school has been recognized as a Blue Ribbon School—and the only private high school in Indiana to earn the honor in this school year.

"Being named a National Blue Ribbon School is such an honor and a great

acknowledgment of the hard work, passion and dedication our educators put in each and every day," said Cathedral principal Julie Barthel. "Cathedral is a special place, and to get this distinction affirms the work that we do for our students each day to educate hearts and minds. I could not be more proud of the entire Cathedral family."

Representatives from both schools were in Washington on Nov. 3 for the National Blue Ribbon awards ceremony led by U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona.

"Blue Ribbon Schools have gone above and beyond to keep students healthy and safe while meeting their academic, social, emotional and

mental health needs," Cardona said in announcing this year's honored schools. "These schools show what is possible to make an enduring, positive difference in students' lives." †



Walter Chandler, left, Gemma Karpinski and John Verspelt sport T-shirts showing their celebration of Christ the King School in Indianapolis being named a 2022 national Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. (Submitted photo)

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Students' time encountering Christ in adoration 'does make a difference'

By Natalie Hoefler

Christ's command was clear: "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (Mt 19:14)

Many parish schools in central and southern Indiana are taking this command literally: they are building time in the school day for eucharistic adoration.

It might be for 15 minutes or an hour. It might involve praise and worship or kneeling in prayer or reading Scripture or journaling. And it might be once a quarter or weekly.

But one aspect is constant: the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist displayed reverently in a monstrance on an altar.

"If we really believe Jesus is present in the Eucharist—body, blood, soul and divinity—then that is the best place to have our kids get to know him," says Father Kyle Rodden. One of his two parishes, St. Joseph in Corydon, has a kindergarten through eighth-grade school.

"None of the faith makes sense without that foundational relationship and getting to know Jesus in a direct way through an encounter and time spent with him in the Eucharist."

This article looks at how three schools in the archdiocese build in time for adoration: St. Gabriel in Connorsville, St. Nicholas in Ripley County and St. Joseph in Corydon.

'Jesus is there on the altar'

At St. Gabriel School, students take time throughout the day on the first Tuesday of the month to participate in the parish's open adoration from 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

"The small children have a harder time," admits Michelle Struewing, the parish's administrator of religious education. "But the older kids have taken to using it for silence and some journaling to reflect on their faith."

"I think it's been very good for them. Some of them have started taking prayer books with them and reflect on prayers they learned in class."

To help their students understand what adoration is, teachers use religious textbooks but also "talk with the kids and reiterate that Jesus is there on the altar, trying to help them understand that concept and answer any questions they have ahead of time," says Struewing.

She views student adoration time as an opportunity for them to learn "the importance of being close to our Lord

and Savior—for the kids to be able to spend time with Jesus in prayer and reflection, to value the silence, to listen for God's call, to have a conversation with Jesus while he's right there in front of them and to give them that relationship, to give their faith a deeper meaning."

'It just makes everybody feel better'

Once a quarter, the students of St. Nicholas School in Ripley County join their parish's pastor Father Shaun Whittington in an hour of adoration.

It's a practice eighth-grade teacher Elizabeth Vollmer says has been in place at least since she began working at the school six years ago.

"We have praise and worship, sing songs and have Benediction," she says. "And Father Whittington gives talks and offers things for us to think and pray about during our adoration time."

Adoration is part of the parish's culture, says Vollmer. "Our priest always talks in homilies about how important being in front of the Blessed Sacrament is. In school [Mass] homilies, he'll talk about how important it is to sit in front of the Lord and give him all the best and worst part of your day, how he's your friend and should be one to go to for sharing all your news."

During his hour of adoration with the students, Father Whittington "usually invites the younger kids to sit right around the monstrance so they can be up close and personal," Vollmer explains. "Other times he'll guide us through a prayer where we invite Jesus to come into our hearts and to be our best friend—it's very sweet. Other times he invites us just to come up to the altar and kneel and pour our heart out to the Lord."

She appreciates the impact time in adoration has on her eighth-grade students.



Students of St. Nicholas School in Ripley County gather with Father Shaun Whittington around a monstrance during a holy hour of adoration on Sept. 28, 2021, in St. Nicholas Church. (Submitted photo)

"They come away from those holy hours just completely uplifted," says Vollmer. "There's just a sense of peace in them. When we come back to class, there's just a calm about them."

"They really look forward to those days. When we give ourselves to the Lord, it just makes everybody feel better."

'It does make a difference'

Peek into St. Joseph Church in Corydon on Monday during school hours, and you're guaranteed to find students of the parish's school adoring the Lord.

"Since we have parish adoration on Monday from 8 a.m.-8 p.m., our theology teacher [Tina Schunemann] brings her classes to pray before the Blessed Sacrament," says Father Rodden.

Schunemann sees the children's time in adoration as crucial.

"Unless students develop a personal relationship with Jesus, anything that they learn about their faith will not be fruitful or meaningful," she explains.

Time before Christ in the Eucharist is not just a way for Catholic students to grow in their faith, but non-Catholic students as well.

"Adoration is great evangelization to

our students who are not Catholic," says Schunemann. "The source and summit of our faith is before them every Monday, visible on the altar."

"And in a time when many Catholics do not believe in the real presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, it is a tangible and real experience of our Lord before them."

"Even if they don't fully grasp this type of prayer, I believe they will eventually look back at this time as pivotal in their spiritual journey."

To her joy, adoration is time her students eagerly anticipate.

"If for some reason we don't attend on a Monday, they are sincerely disappointed," Schunemann says. "They have come to expect it as part of their theology class. It's often the first thing they ask as they walk into class on Monday—'Are we going to church?'"

"Many students tell me it's their favorite part of theology [class], that they find it peaceful and that they wish it was longer than 30 minutes."

The children's comments confirm what Father Rodden believes: "When you can encounter the Lord, who is physically present in the Eucharist, it does make a difference." †

A principal's prayer wish for her students comes true

By Kelly England

Principal of St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis

As a Catholic school, helping our students grow in their faith is central to our existence. We start and end each

day in prayer. We gather as a school community for Mass and eucharistic adoration on Fridays. We help prepare students to receive the sacraments. We promote service. But the question remained: What else could we do?

This year, we decided to try

something new. We added Tuesday afternoon prayer to the weekly schedule. Similar to Mass on Fridays, this is a time when we gather as a school over in the church, with the goal of giving our students experience with different forms of prayer. The first prayer we focused on was the rosary.

I'll be honest. The first time we prayed the rosary as a school was rough. Kindergartners and first graders were falling asleep. Older students were squirmy. The pacing was off, and we just couldn't get the hang of letting the leader say the first half of the prayer and then everyone joining in on the second half. And let's not even talk about the Glory Be! It was clear that we needed practice. And what happened as we practiced was nothing short of grace.

We started by purchasing a rosary guide for all students in grades two through eight so that they could follow along and become more familiar with the words to the prayers. The teachers

helped teach the students how to use their fingers to keep track of the Hail Marys or by having students use beads and string to make their own rosaries. We decided to pray the rosary at least once every two to three weeks (every week during October, the month of the rosary). And it was beautiful.

It didn't take long for participation to increase. We then started to see participation in our weekly Mass increase as well. Students have been more engaged during prayer and Mass. On any given Tuesday, you can look around the church and see students gripping their rosary beads carefully as they recite the prayers. Our youngest students are often so eager to participate that I have to motion to them to slow down as they pray. And the looks on their faces are simply priceless. It just took a little practice to find the joy in prayer.

If you are ever in need of little extra joy in your day, please join us for a rosary! †



Kelly England, principal of St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis, prays the rosary with students. (Submitted photo)



St. Barnabas School students help develop Burmese Catholic website, app

By Sean Gallagher

It started with a dream and a conversation.

Paul Hnin dreamed of a way to help nurture the life of prayer and faith of his fellow Hakha Chin Catholics living in the archdiocese, in other places around the world and in his native Myanmar, where they face persecution from a military dictatorship in the southeast Asian country.

Hnin serves the Hakha Chin community as a pastoral associate at St. Barnabas Parish on Indianapolis' southside. That part of the city has seen an estimated 20,000 people in the ethnic group, many of them Catholic, come to live there in the past 10-15 years.

Hnin envisioned a website and app that would have hundreds of pages of Catholic prayers and songs in the Hakha Chin language. Books with this kind of content, Hnin knew, are hard to find in this language and difficult for the people of this Burmese ethnic group to transport as they flee their country for safety and freedom.

"I wanted to create an app so that people could easily access that information," said Hnin. "People in Myanmar have phones, so that would be an easy way to share information with them."

To make the dream a reality, Hnin had a conversation last summer with Clint Meinerding, a technology teacher and the information technology administrator at St. Barnabas School.

"When Paul came and asked me to make an app, I said that I didn't know

how to do that," Meinerding recalled. "He said, 'Well, I'll say a prayer that you can learn how to do it.'"

Meinerding was able to expand his knowledge of web development, but he soon learned that he couldn't do this work alone.

"When Paul came to me and explained that there were going to be hundreds and hundreds of songs [on the website and app], I was a bit overwhelmed," he said. "He started sending me all the stuff and I'm like, 'I need help.'"

To get that help, Meinerding turned to four St. Barnabas eighth-grade students. They took skills they had learned in Meinerding's technology classes and went to work on developing pages for the website and app.

They dove headfirst into the project, recalled one of the students, Lauren Koleszar. She and the others worked on the website and app before school and during lunch periods, recesses and study periods. All told, they put in about 100 hours on making the website and app a reality.

"We've done coding in classes," Lauren said. "But this was something like real-life coding."

Lauren was also motivated to make sacrifices to work on the project for another reason.

"It was really important for me to help out because it's helping [Hakha Chin] people learn the songs and help them grow closer to God and in their faith," she said.

"They just went to work," Meinerding said. "They loved it. I definitely couldn't have done it without their help."



Eli Pac, left, Thomas Nguyen, Tessa Mize and Lauren Koleszar, all eighth-graders at St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis, sit in their school's computer classroom. They worked to develop a website and app that will help Hakha Chin Catholics in Indianapolis, Myanmar and around the world to pray and grow in their faith. (Submitted photo)

The website is up and running at www.hakkacatholic.com. The app version of the website, known as "Hla & Thlacamnak Catholic," is available for free on Android and Apple devices.

It contains prayers for Mass, hundreds of songs and other prayers, including those for a "dry Mass," a prayer service for Catholics in Myanmar who don't have priests to celebrate Mass for them on a regular basis.

"Honestly, this is probably the most important project I've worked on," Meinerding said. "It has a possibility of global ramifications. It's something that

people all over the world can use. It's very rewarding and satisfying."

"I hope that people here in America and countries all over the world will use our app to help them to get closer to God," Hnin said. "It's amazing to see what Clint and his team has created. I thought that it was possible to make something like this, but it is great to see it happen."

(Please note that while the ordinary spelling of the ethnic group from Myanmar served by the website and app is "Hakha," the spelling of the web address in the article is correct.) †

Holy Spirit



school.holyspirit-indy.org

Little Flower



littleflowerparishschool.org

Our Lady of Lourdes



ollindy.org

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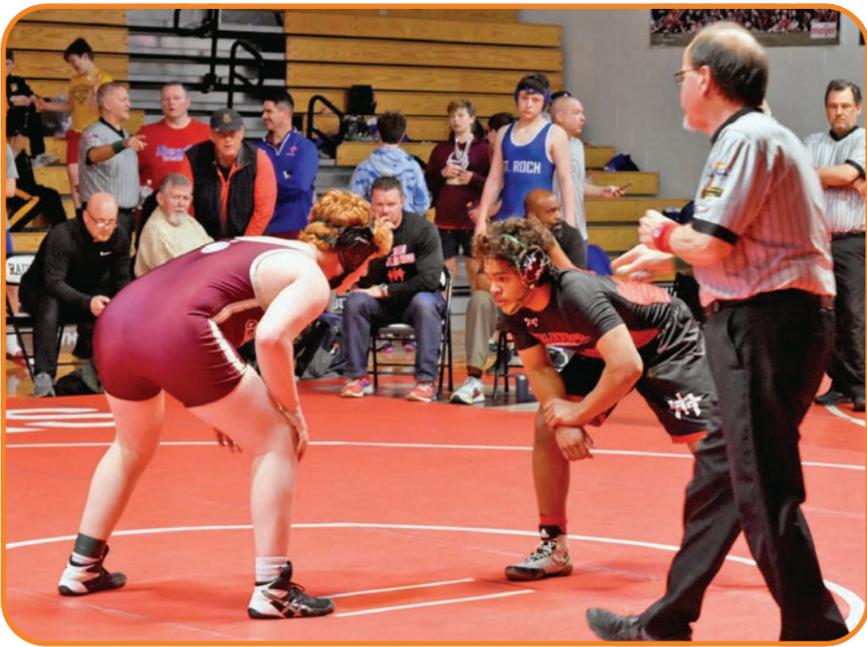
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A year of celebrating the fun and friendships
of the Catholic Youth Organization





SGO funds make Catholic education more accessible, give 50% tax credit

By Natalie Hoefler

Amy Huber laughs when recalling the things she's done as part of a "fear factor" challenge at an annual school fundraiser.

"Spinning an 'Eat-It-Or-Wear-It' wheel, where you have to choose to eat or wear whatever the spinner lands on," she says. "It's been Spam, mayonnaise, sardines, chocolate syrup—that was a good one!"

The principal of Holy Family School in New Albany—along with Father Jeremy Gries, the parish's pastor—has had to wear a snake around the neck, reach into a bag of crickets to find a key and compete in a cracker-eating contest.

"The kids love it," she says, and the challenges are "absolutely worth it!"

Worth it for the smiles—but also for the cause. The annual fundraiser supports the school's Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) fund. Such funds help cover the costs of attending a private school, including every archdiocesan grade- and high school and some private Catholic schools in central and southern Indiana.

Additionally, donors to such funds are eligible for a 50% tax credit.

"It lightens the financial burden for some of our families, knowing this money is available for them," says Huber.

SGO funds 'critical to eligibility for voucher program'

In conjunction with the Indiana Choice Scholarship Program—also known as the "voucher" or "choice" program—SGO funds make private schools a possibility for families who could otherwise not afford such an education for their children.

"In 2011 when the voucher program passed, in law we married SGOs to the voucher program, and SGOs took off," says John Elcesser, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA).



John Elcesser

"The SGO funds supplement the voucher program

by making families eligible for it or by helping families afford private school," including Catholic schools, he explains.

Elcesser calls the funds "critical to eligibility for the voucher program both at the kindergarten and high school level."

For instance, Huber has found the Holy Family SGO fund useful as financial aid for incoming kindergarten students, "and then they qualify for the choice program in first grade and beyond."

Elcesser adds that SGO funds are "especially beneficial in high schools where the voucher program still left a financial gap that made tuition unattainable."

And thanks to a recent change to the choice program, he says, "Now a family of four can have an income up to \$153,000 and still be available for SGO and choice school funds."

'Folks don't realize how easy it is'

Unlike the state-funded voucher program, schools must raise money for their SGO fund. But the tax benefit sweetens the deal for donors.

"The 50% tax credit is a public incentive for private giving," says Elcesser.

"Getting the credit is very simple from a tax perspective. A lot of folks don't realize how easy it is. SGOs take responsibility for filing donations with the Department of Revenue, so donors just need to check a box on their tax form. And it's not a deduction, it's a credit—50% of what you give."

There are "no limits on the size of qualifying contributions" to a Scholarship Granting Organization fund, according to the Indiana government website (cutt.ly/SGO). However, it notes that "the entire tax credit program has a limit of \$18.5 million for fiscal year 2022-23." As of Jan. 17, more than \$6.3 million of that amount was still available.

Part of INPEA's agenda for the 2023 legislative session is to make the voucher program accessible to even more families, "and that includes SGOs," says Elcesser.

When contributing to an SGO, donors can specify which private school's fund they wish to contribute to.

Additionally, "Both the archdiocese and Mother Theodore Catholic Academies have their own SGO accounts, and donations can be made with those names listed," says Sarah Watson, archdiocesan assistant superintendent for elementary education. "These [donations] go into a larger pool. In the case of the archdiocese, we allow schools who are in need of funds to apply to receive them."

'Overjoyed with ... family environment and Catholic values'

Through the years, schools have gotten "more sophisticated" in how they raise money for their SGO fund, says Elcesser.

"Some integrate donations to their SGO into giving to their annual fund," he says.

And then there's making a principal and pastor crack eggs over each other's head at a community fundraising event.

"There's a carton of eggs, and only one is not boiled," Huber says with a laugh. "I've gotten the raw egg before—it wasn't pretty!"



Father Jeremy Gries, pastor of Holy Family Parish in New Albany, and Amy Huber, principal of the parish's school, share a hug and smiles after completing a "Wear-it-Or-Eat-It" challenge as part of a fundraiser for the school's Scholarship Granting Organization fund on Oct. 21, 2022. (Submitted photo by Elijah Schultz, Silver Glass Productions)

But last year's Oct. 21 fundraiser garnered \$16,750 for Holy Family's SGO fund, money that will help make a Catholic education possible for numerous students.

"We were able to award over \$50,000 in SGO scholarships to 31 students in the 2021-22 school year, and this year we've helped 21 students," says Huber.

"We definitely have had families—Catholic and non-Catholic—who wouldn't have been able to even entertain the thought of coming to our school because of tuition and their income, but the SGO made it possible."

One family who benefited from the

school's SGO went on to be baptized and received into the full communion of the Church, notes Huber.

"Parents are just overjoyed with the family environment here and the Catholic values that we teach that they didn't see in their public school, but because of the SGO, they're a part of it." †

(For more information on the archdiocese's Scholarship Granting Organization, Institute for Quality Education, or for information on how to donate online or by check, go to www.i4qed.org/sgo/donors. For a list of schools with an SGO fund, go to cutt.ly/SGOSchools.) †



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How to afford A CATHOLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION Understanding Tax Credit Scholarships and Indiana School Vouchers

Tax Credit Scholarship (SGO)

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- My family is at least 300% or below the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Guidelines* (see chart).

TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP & VOUCHER INCOME ELIGIBILITY

2022-2023 TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP INCOME GUIDELINES

Household Size	Household Income
1	\$75,424.50
2	\$101,620.50
3	\$127,816.50
4	\$154,012.50
5	\$180,208.50
6	\$206,404.50
7	\$232,600.50
8	\$258,796.50
9	\$284,992.50
10	\$311,188.50

* Income levels are based on adjusted gross income and are 300% of the cap for Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program guidelines. SGOs may set their income limits lower than 300% if they so choose.

What are Tax Credit Scholarships?

The Indiana Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides scholarship support to families who want to enroll their children in the Catholic school of their choice. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive a minimum of a \$500 Tax Credit Scholarship.

Who qualifies for a Tax Credit Scholarship?

- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines of 300% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
- A student who is enrolled in an eligible Catholic school.

Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Current Catholic school students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit www.i4qed.org/sgo.

Additional local scholarships
may also be available.
Contact your local Catholic school.

Choice Scholarship

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- Apply before September 1, 2023
- My family meets both eligibility criteria (i.e., income and track. See below)

K-12 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

What is an Indiana School Voucher?

A Voucher is a state-funded scholarship that helps cover the cost of tuition at a private school. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive up to 90% of the local per-student state funding amount.

Who qualifies for a Voucher?

- I. Income Eligibility:** My family is at or below 300% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart). Note: Tax Credit Scholarship and Choice Scholarship financial eligibility is the same for both programs
- II. Track Eligibility:**
 - Student received a Choice Scholarship in a preceding school year, including a school year that does not immediately precede the current school year.
 - Student received a Tax Credit Scholarship from an approved SGO during any previous school year.
 - Student has a disability that requires special education services, a documented IEP or ISP.
 - Student was enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in a public school, including a charter school, in Indiana for prior two semesters.
 - Student has a sibling who received a Choice Scholarship or Tax Credit Scholarship at any time in their K-12 education.
 - Student received and used an Early Education Grant to attend Pre-K at an eligible Choice School and the child is remaining at that school for Kindergarten.
 - Student is in foster care.

Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Eligible students enrolled in a Catholic school CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply for an Indiana school Voucher?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. Families must apply for both the Tax Credit Scholarship and the Voucher Program at the Catholic school of their choice.

A new ESA program, serving students with special needs, was introduced this year. For more information, visit www.in.gov/tos/inesa/home.

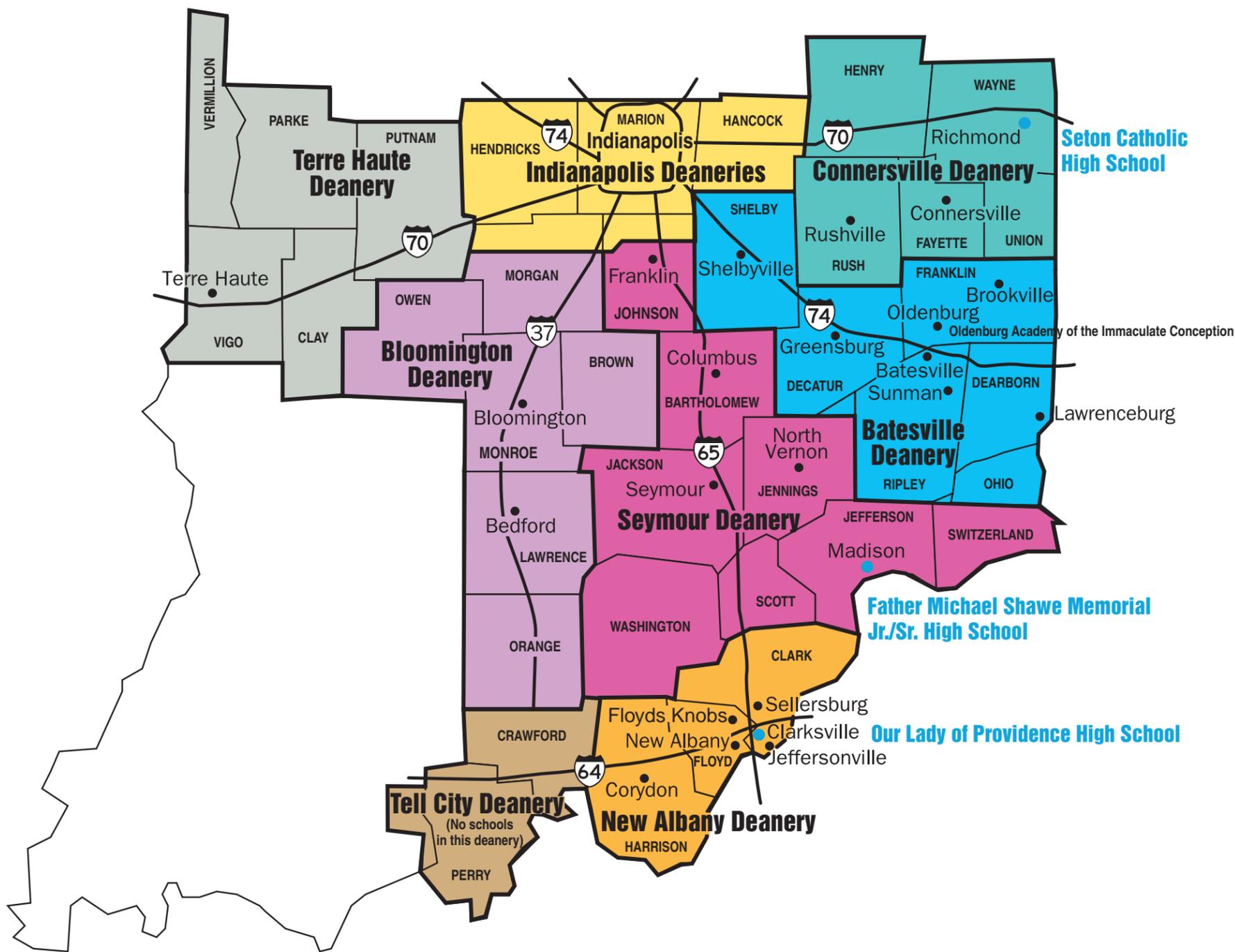
Pre-K vouchers are available in all counties
throughout Indiana. For more information,
log onto www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/4932.htm.



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS



Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis



DEANERY SCHOOLS

Batesville Deanery

Batesville
St. Louis School (PK-8)
 17 St. Louis Place
 Batesville, IN 47006
 812-934-3310

Brookville
St. Michael School (PK-8)
 275 High St.
 Brookville, IN 47012
 765-647-4961

Greensburg
St. Mary School (PK-8)
 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way
 Greensburg, IN 47240
 812-663-2804

Lawrenceburg
St. Lawrence School (K-8)
 524 Walnut St.
 Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
 812-537-3690

Ripley County
St. Nicholas School (PK-8)
 6459 E. St. Nicholas Drive
 Sunman, IN 47041
 812-623-2348

Shelbyville
St. Joseph School (PK-5)
 127 E. Broadway
 Shelbyville, IN 46176
 317-398-4202

Bloomington Deanery

Bedford
St. Vincent de Paul School (PK-8)
 923 18th St.
 Bedford, IN 47421
 812-279-2540

Bloomington
St. Charles Borromeo School (PK-8)
 2224 E. Third St.
 Bloomington, IN 47401
 812-336-5853

Connersville Deanery
Connersville
St. Gabriel School (PK-6)
 224 W. Ninth St.
 Connersville, IN 47331
 765-825-7951

Richmond
Seton Catholic High School (7-12)
 233 S. 5th St.
 Richmond, IN 47374
 765-965-6956

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School (PK-6)
 801 W. Main St.
 Richmond, IN 47374
 765-962-4877

Rushville
St. Mary School (PK-6)
 226 E. Fifth St.
 Rushville, IN 46173
 765-932-3639

New Albany Deanery

Clarksville
Our Lady of Providence High School (9-12)
 707 Providence Way
 Clarksville, IN 47129
 812-945-2538

St. Anthony of Padua School (PK-8)
 320 N. Sherwood Ave.
 Clarksville, IN 47129
 812-282-2144

Corydon
St. Joseph School (PK-8)
 512 N. Mulberry St.
 Corydon, IN 47112
 812-738-4549

Floyd County
St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School (PK-8)
 3033 Martin Road
 Floyds Knobs, IN 47119
 812-923-1630

Jeffersonville
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus School (PK-8)
 1842 E. Eighth St.
 Jeffersonville, IN 47130
 812-283-3123

New Albany
Holy Family School (PK-8)
 217 W. Daisy Lane
 New Albany, IN 47150
 812-944-6090

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School (PK-8)
 1752 Scheller Lane
 New Albany, IN 47150
 812-944-7676

Sellersburg
St. John Paul II School (PK-8)
 105 St. Paul St.
 Sellersburg, IN 47172
 812-246-3266

Seymour Deanery
Columbus
St. Bartholomew School (K-8)
 1306 27th St.
 Columbus, IN 47201
 812-372-6830

Franklin
St. Rose of Lima School (PK-7)
 114 Lancelot Drive
 Franklin, IN 46131
 317-738-3451

Madison
Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School (7-12)
 201 W. State St.
 Madison, IN 47250
 812-273-2150

Pope John XXIII School (PK-6)
 221 W. State St.
 Madison, IN 47250
 812-273-3957

North Vernon
St. Mary School (PK-8)
 209 Washington St.
 North Vernon, IN 47265
 812-346-3445

Seymour
St. Ambrose School (PK-8)
 301 S. Chestnut St.
 Seymour, IN 47274
 812-522-3522

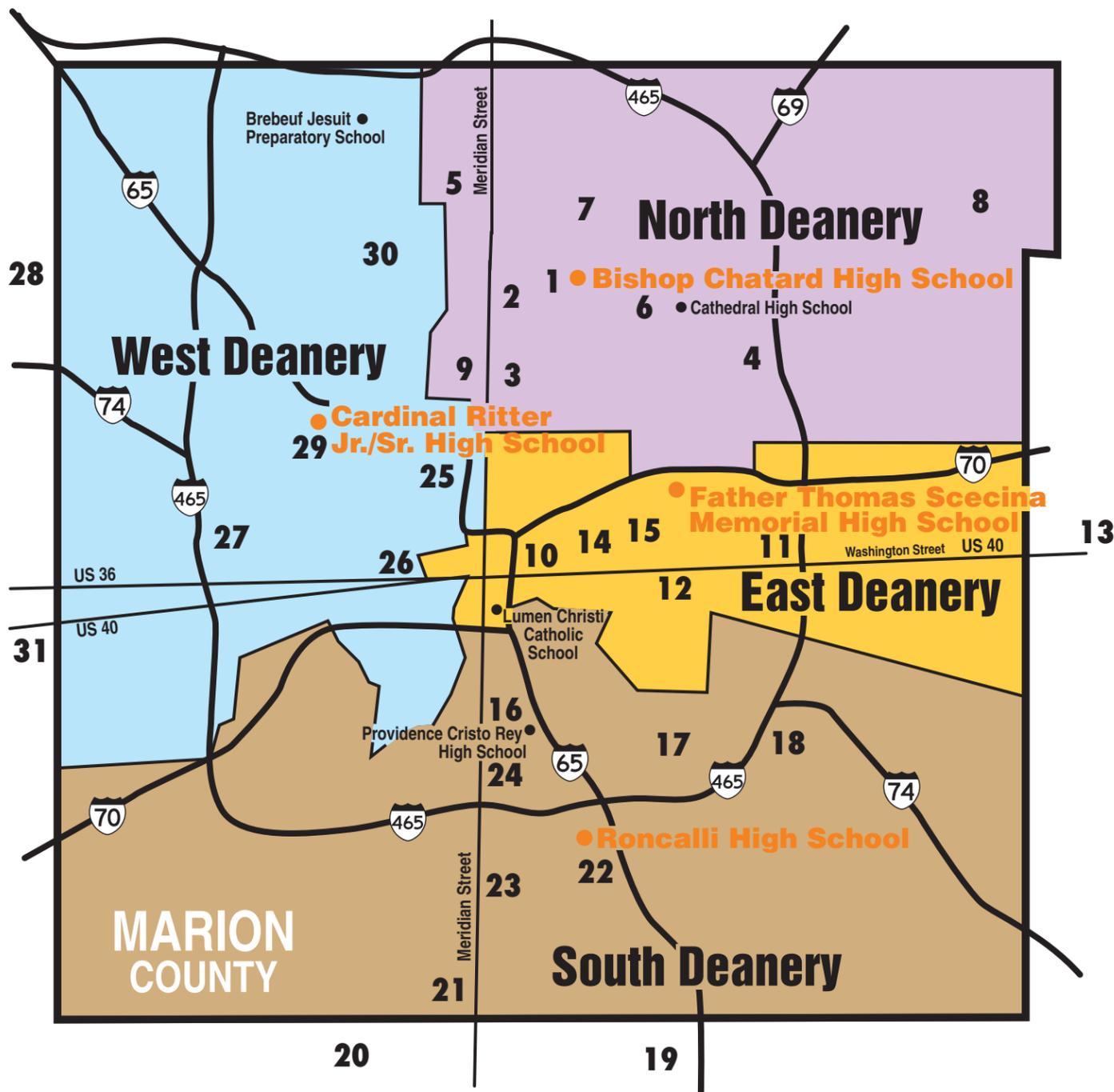
Terre Haute Deanery

Terre Haute
St. Patrick School (PK-8)
 449 S. 19th St.
 Terre Haute, IN 47803
 812-232-2157

Private High School
Oldenburg
Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception (9-12)
 1 Twister Circle
 P.O. Box 200
 Oldenburg, IN 47036
 812-934-4440



Catholic Schools in the Greater Indianapolis Area



GREATER INDIANAPOLIS DEANERY SCHOOLS

Indianapolis North Deanery

- **Bishop Chatard High School (9-12)**
5885 N. Crittenden Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-251-1451
- 1. Christ the King School (K-8)**
5858 N. Crittenden Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-257-9366
- 2. Immaculate Heart of Mary School (K-8)**
317 E. 57th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-255-5468
- 3. St. Joan of Arc School (PK-8)**
500 E. 42nd St.
Indianapolis, IN 46205
317-283-1518
- 4. St. Lawrence School (PK-8)**
6950 E. 46th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46226
317-543-4923
- 5. St. Luke the Evangelist School (PK-8)**
7575 Holliday Dr. East
Indianapolis, IN 46260
317-255-3912
- 6. St. Matthew the Apostle School (PK-8)**
4100 E. 56th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-251-3997

- 7. St. Pius X School (K-8)**
7200 Sarto Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317-466-3361
- 8. St. Simon the Apostle School (PK-8)**
8155 Oaklondon Road
Indianapolis, IN 46236
317-826-6000
- 9. St. Thomas Aquinas School (PK-8)**
4600 N. Illinois St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-255-6244

Indianapolis East Deanery

- **Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School (9-12)**
5000 Nowland Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-356-6377
- 10. Holy Cross Central School (K-8) ***
125 N. Oriental St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-638-9068
- 11. Holy Spirit School (PK-8)**
7241 E. 10th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46219
317-352-1243
- 12. Our Lady of Lourdes School (PK-8)**
30 S. Downey St.
Indianapolis, IN 46219
317-357-3316

- 13. St. Michael School (PK-8)**
515 Jefferson Blvd.
Greenfield, IN 46140
317-462-6380
- 14. St. Philip Neri School (PK-8) ***
545 N. Eastern Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-826-0134
- 15. St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School (PK-8)**
1401 N. Bosart Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-353-2282

Indianapolis South Deanery

- **Roncalli High School (9-12)**
3300 Prague Road
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-787-8277
- 16. Central Catholic School (PK-8) ***
1155 E. Cameron St.
Indianapolis, IN 46203
317-783-7759
- 17. Holy Name of Jesus School (PK-8)**
21 N. 17th Ave.
Beech Grove, IN 46107
317-784-9078

- 18. Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ School (PK-8)**
3310 S. Meadow Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46239
317-357-1459
- 19. Our Lady of the Greenwood School (PK-8)**
399 S. Meridian St.
Greenwood, IN 46143
317-881-1300
- 20. SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School (PK-8)**
5901 Olive Branch Road
Greenwood, IN 46143
317-215-2826
- 21. St. Barnabas School (PK-8)**
8300 Rahke Road
Indianapolis, IN 46217
317-881-7422
- 22. St. Jude School (PK-8)**
5375 McFarland Road
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-784-6828
- 23. St. Mark the Evangelist School (PK-8)**
541 E. Edgewood Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-786-4013
- 24. St. Roch School (PK-8)**
3603 S. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-784-9144

Indianapolis West Deanery

- **Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School (7-12)**
3360 W. 30th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-924-4333
- 25. Holy Angels School (PK-6) ***
2822 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-926-5211
- 26. St. Anthony School (PK-8)**
349 N. Warman Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-636-3739
- 27. St. Christopher School (PK-6)**
5335 W. 16th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46224
317-241-6314
- 28. St. Malachy School (PK-8)**
330 N. Green St.
Brownsburg, IN 46112
317-852-2242
- 29. St. Michael-St. Gabriel Archangels School (PK-8)**
3352 W. 30th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-926-0516

- 30. St. Monica School (PK-8)**
6131 N. Michigan Road
Indianapolis, IN 46228
317-255-7153
- 31. St. Susanna School (PK-8)**
1212 E. Main St.
Plainfield, IN 46168
317-839-3713

Private Schools

- **Lumen Christi Catholic School (PK-12)**
580 E. Stevens St.
Indianapolis, IN 46203
317-632-3174
- **Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School (9-12)**
2801 W. 86th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46268
317-524-7128
- **Cathedral High School (9-12)**
5225 E. 56th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46226
317-542-1481
- **Providence Cristo Rey High School (9-12)**
2717 S. East St.
Indianapolis, IN 46225
317-860-1000

* Mother Theodore Catholic Academies



Cathedral

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HAPPY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK FROM CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL

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- Blessed Basil Moreau C.S.C., Founder, Congregation of Holy Cross



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VIGIL

continued from page 1A

“triumphalism” and similar approaches will not bring about a victory for life.

The Mass drew between 6,000 and 6,500 people, with most of the congregation filling the Great Upper Church. Dozens also viewed the Mass on screens set up on the lower level of the basilica.

Celebrants included cardinals, archbishops, bishops, abbots and priests. Among them were Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, president of the USCCB; Cardinal Seán P. O’Malley of Boston; Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the U.S.; and two past chairmen of the USCCB’s pro-life committee, namely Archbishops Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., and William E. Lori of Baltimore, who was elected USCCB vice president in November.

Archbishop Pierre read a message from Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, issued on behalf of Pope Francis, who prayed that God would strengthen people’s commitment to protecting human life at every stage. The pontiff imparted his blessing on all those participating in the Jan. 20 national March for Life in Washington.

“His Holiness trusts that Almighty God will strengthen the commitment of all, especially the young, to persevere in their efforts aimed at protecting human life in all its stages, especially through adequate legal measures enacted at every level of society,” the message said.

The spectrum of life issues was illustrated by those who brought the offertory gifts to the altar: a young blind woman guided by her service dog and a friend, a father with his 7-month-old daughter and a mother with her toddler who has Down syndrome.

Before the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the congregation said a “Prayer for Pregnant Mothers,” which read in part: “Guide us as we strive to make our parish communities places of welcome and assistance for mothers in need. Help us become instruments of God’s love and compassion.”

The Mass was followed by a “Holy Hour for Life,” which launched a series of Holy Hours of eucharistic devotion throughout the night in dioceses across the country. An 8 a.m. Mass on Jan. 20 to close the vigil was celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Joseph L. Coffey of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services.

In his homily, Bishop Burbidge called the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling that legalized abortion nationwide “a blight on our nation, our system of justice and our culture.”

Last June, the court overturned *Roe* in its *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision, returning the issue of abortion to the states.

Dobbs “is a moment for joy, and for gratitude; a moment to recall the countless souls who have dedicated themselves to political and social action, to prayer and to service in the name of this cause,” Bishop Burbidge said. “Today we make the gratitude of today’s psalm our own: ‘O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the Earth’” (Ps 8:2).

In a post-*Dobbs* world, efforts must continue to end policies that “target vulnerable global populations with abortion funding or that facilitate alternative means of abortion at home.”

And “we must turn a greater share of our attention to our local communities, from where we may cultivate opportunities in our states to limit the scope of legalized abortion, to curb its funding, or ideally, ban it all together,” Bishop Burbidge said.

Pro-life work begins “with our knowledge of the truth” about abortion

“and our courage to speak it,” he said. “We must learn new and compelling ways to communicate the harsh reality of abortion and the damage it inflicts on children, mothers, fathers and society more broadly.”

He urged Catholics to draw on philosophy, the social sciences, technology and psychology, as well as experts “who understand the landscape on the federal and state levels”—and to coordinate “our efforts, strategies and resources in pursuit of making abortion in our nation unthinkable and illegal.”

He reminded the congregation that “lasting victories will not come from views or hits or retweets; nor from triumphalism, bitterness, or cynicism; but from our sincere efforts to effect true conversion of mind and heart.

“Efforts to persuade rather than attack” will win the day, he said, calling for “engaging in respectful discussion” and “acknowledging the dignity of those with whom we disagree.

“While we hold public officials accountable, we must remember that each of us is accountable also,” Bishop Burbidge said.

Pope Francis, he said, has laid out “our task” with these words: “The secret of Christian living is love. Only love fills the empty spaces caused by evil.”

These “empty spaces” are “where our words must be matched by our actions,” Bishop Burbidge said. “Our work will not be complete until God’s love is felt in every empty space created by abortion.”

“Empty spaces” became a refrain in his homily.

“Into the empty spaces of public discourse on abortion, may we bring



A woman prays with a rosary during eucharistic adoration following the opening Mass of the National Prayer Vigil for Life on Jan. 19 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

clarity and charity in communicating with our opponents,” he said. “Into the empty spaces of our wounded politics, may we communicate the need to let go of partisanship and to do what is right and just.

“Into the empty spaces of culture, may we celebrate truth, beauty and God’s goodness,” he continued. “Into the empty space of fear and loneliness experienced by women facing an unplanned pregnancy, may we offer God’s peace and hope and our untiring commitment to walk with them at every moment.

“Into the empty spaces within the lives of mothers and fathers who mourn from children lost to abortion,” he said, “may we gently voice God’s endless comfort and mercy.” †

Marriage ANNOUNCEMENTS

Be a part of our Spring Marriage Edition

Feb. 17 issue of The Criterion

Couples who are planning to be married between Feb. 17 and July 14 in a marriage that is recognized as a valid sacramental or valid natural marriage, or couples who were wed between July 1, 2022, and Jan. 31 in such a recognized marriage and did not have their engagement announcement in *The Criterion* are invited to submit the information for the upcoming Feb. 17 Spring Marriage Edition.

Announcements can be submitted by mail using the form below or electronically at www.archindy.org/engagements.

E-mailed photos

Photos should be saved in jpg format and be at least 500 kb. Color photos are preferred. We recommend sending a photo where the couple’s faces are close to each other. Please send the photo as an attachment to the e-mail: alewis@archindy.org. Subject line: Spring Marriage (Last name). In the e-mail, please include the information in the form located below.

If it is not possible to e-mail a photo, a photo can be mailed with the bottom form. Please no photocopies or laser prints. To have the photo returned, please include a return addressed envelope with a postage stamp on it.

Deadline

All announcements and photos must be received by 5 p.m. on Tuesday Jan. 31.

— Use this form to furnish information by mail —

Clip and mail to: BRIDES, The Criterion, ATTN: Ann Lewis, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. To submit information online go to: www.archindy.org/engagements. Deadline with photos: Tuesday, Jan. 31 at 5 p.m.

Please print or type:

Name of Bride (first, middle, last)		Daytime Phone	
Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code
Name of Bride’s Parents (first, last)			
City		State	
Name of Bridegroom (first, middle, last)			
Name of Bridegroom’s Parents (first, last)			
City		State	
Wedding Date	Church	City	State
<input type="checkbox"/> Photo Enclosed	Signature of person furnishing information		Relationship Daytime Phone
<input type="checkbox"/> Return photo			
<input type="checkbox"/> No Picture			

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Hispanic Ministry/Felix Navarrete

Let's do all we can to promote religious vocations

In our secularized society, the call to the priesthood and the consecrated life is an “old-fashioned” affair. Despite the times in which we live, the crisis of moral and Christian values leads humanity more and more to an existential void that can only be filled by God.



The history of our Church tells us about the lives of brave men and women who, throughout the centuries, have fervently pursued an ideal, a thought that did not allow them to put themselves before the needs of others; simple people, from all walks of life who sought the common good without seeking to please the world. Children, young people and adults who knew how to listen

to their inner voice, far from the noise of the world, as they embarked toward heaven. We know them as saints.

In the 21st century, our Church remains alive, and even with ups and downs, we continue to be a sign of hope for humanity. It is now when we most need to strengthen our communities, work together for the common good, act with commitment and dedication in our ministries, but above all, resume teaching Christian values at home, instilling the teaching of God's love and respect for divine things, and urgently wake up from a lethargy where we have remained comfortable waiting for someone else to take our responsibilities in the formation of our children.

It is time to reflect and, through prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to revive our faith, to open our spiritual senses and help us to be saints and to form saints.

Materialism and competition in the workplace have distanced us from a sense of service that our life as Christians entails. Parents no longer conceive of the idea that their children become future priests or religious sisters; they think it is not a viable option when considering careers in an economic sense and through competition.

Sadly, we do not think about the need for priests and religious, who bring us closer to a true encounter with the person of Jesus. And only in times of need, we desperately seek help from these professionals, whose mission is to save souls.

Have you wondered what would happen tomorrow in a society where there are no priests or nuns? Who will dry the tears of the downcast? Who will speak for the underdogs? Who will feed the needy? Who will watch over the immigrants? Who?

In the U.S., which many now call home, our Hispanic community represents more than 35% of Catholics nationwide, which translates to more than 30 million Hispanic Catholics. However, according to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, only 15% of priestly ordinations are nurtured through Hispanic families.

See HISPANIC, page 11A

Ministerio Hispano/Felix Navarrete

Hagamos todo lo que podemos para promover las vocaciones

En una sociedad tan secularizada, el llamado a la vocación del sacerdocio y la vida consagrada es un asunto “pasado de moda.” No obstante los tiempos que vivimos actualmente, la crisis de valores morales y cristianos, conducen al hombre cada vez más, a un vacío existencial que solo puede ser llenado por alguien: Dios.

La historia de nuestra iglesia, nos relata la vida de hombres y mujeres valientes que a lo largo de los siglos han perseguido fervientemente un ideal, un pensamiento que no les permitió anteponerse a las necesidades externas; personas simples, de todos los estratos sociales que buscaron el bien común sin buscar agradar a los demás. Niños, jóvenes y adultos que supieron escuchar la voz interior, alejados del ruido del mundo y se embarcaron con rumbo al cielo, a ellos les conocemos como Santos.

En pleno siglo XXI, nuestra Iglesia se mantiene viva, y aún con altos y bajos, seguimos siendo sin duda, una señal de esperanza para la humanidad, y es ahora cuando más necesitamos fortalecer nuestras relaciones comunitarias, trabajar juntos por un bien común, actuar con compromiso y entrega en nuestros ministerios, pero sobre todo, retomar los valores cristianos en el hogar, inculcar la enseñanza del amor de Dios y el respeto por las cosas divinas, necesitamos urgentemente despertar de un letargo donde hemos permanecido cómodos esperando que alguien más

tome nuestras responsabilidades en la formación de nuestros hijos. Es momento de reflexionar y mediante la oración pedir al Espíritu Santo que reavive nuestra fe, que abra nuestros sentidos espirituales y nos ayude a ser santos y formar santos.

El materialismo y la competencia profesional nos ha alejado del sentido de servicio que conlleva nuestra vida como “cristianos,” los padres ya no conciben la idea que sus hijos se conviertan en futuros sacerdotes o religiosas, no es una opción viable—claro en el sentido económico y de competencia—por el contrario, hoy en día, las profesiones se eligen conforme el nivel de poder adquisitivo, tristemente no pensamos en la necesidad que existe de sacerdotes y religiosas que nos acerquen a un encuentro verdadero con la persona de Jesús, y solo en los momentos de necesidad buscamos desesperadamente la ayuda de estos profesionales del alma.

Usted se ha preguntado, que sucedería el día de mañana en una sociedad profesionalmente desarrollada donde no hayan sacerdotes o religiosas? Quién enjugará las lágrimas de los abatidos? Quién hablará por los desvalidos? Quién dará de comer al necesitado? Quién velará por los Inmigrantes? Quién?

En el país que vivimos, que se ha convertido en el nuestro, nuestra comunidad Hispana representa más del 35% de los católicos a nivel nacional, lo que significa aproximadamente más

Mira HISPANO, página 11A

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

Sacred friendship conversations build bridges in ecumenism

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from Jan. 18-Jan. 25 recently ended.

Many Christians in our country petitioned God for more progress to be made to fulfill Jesus' mandate “... that all may be one” (Jn 17:21).

This year, they prayed for doing good and seeking justice (Is 1:17). A prayer service for Christian unity focused on such

good and justice for Native Americans and people of color in our country.

It ended with a challenge for Christians who long for unity to work for unity through justice in the human family.

Ours was a stirring prayer at Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Indianapolis!

Provisionally, I was afforded an additional opportunity to focus on prayer with folks of other religions just before the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity began.

The board of the Greater Indianapolis Multifaith Alliance has made a commitment to nurture “sacred friendships” among its members.

Once a month, we gather with one of three groups by Zoom.

Our topic this month was on New Year's resolutions. Do we find them valuable or not? Do we make them? If we do, are we successful? You may wonder

how this topic lead to prayer.

It happened rather quickly. On a call with a Methodist named Sarah, Rabbi Aaron and Rabbi Brett, three of us discovered we eschew resolutions centered on food, exercise, weight loss, etc.

Instead, we found the common ground of New Year's resolutions based in prayer.

I noted that each year I resolve to add more time to quiet prayer and another resource for personal prayer. This is my recommitment to my daily prayer routine.

This moved Sarah to note her daily devotions—Scripture reading, quiet prayer and the writings of spiritual authors. She does not make a New Year's resolution, but rather a daily promise to be prayerful.

One of her favorite spiritual writers is Franciscan Father Richard Rohr.

She was not alone. Rabbi Aaron noted he, too, reads Father Rohr. He finds him challenging and insightful, but he does not always agree with him.

Rabbi Brett shared that he does make New Year's resolutions in line with our culture. Yet his spiritual resolve is foremost.

He noted that Jewish prayer is “study” of the sacred writings—the Pentateuch, the whole of the Hebrew Bible, and the Talmud (rabbinic sacred writings).

Rabbi Aaron agreed. Their exchange led us to consider the Jewish concepts of *Keva* and *Kavanah*.

Keva, we learned, is prayer's structure, framework and foundation. Jewish

liturgical prayer is such a structure.

Kavanah is bringing our needs to God and sharing our deepest spiritual concerns with our community. Put another way, *Kavanah* emerges from the spontaneity of the heart, giving prayer intentionality.

Both Sarah and I echoed these two concepts in our denominational Christian prayer forms.

This led us then to discuss “spontaneous prayer.” Rabbi Aaron first encountered such in working with Christian, evangelical congregations. It was a form of prayer unknown to him at first. Over time, he became proficient.

This led to the remaining three of us to note our experience of the same: comfort, anxiety, flow of the Spirit and joy in such prayer.

Then we found ourselves exploring evangelical, non-denominational and non-liturgical communal prayer.

It was quite an hour—centered on our experience of communal and personal prayer in our lives! The ease of exchange and vulnerability in its midst was a gift.

At the end, we resolved to continue these sacred friendship conversations.

It was a very good way to begin the new year!

(Father Rick Ginther is director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs. He is also the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Our young people are ‘prophets of the Most High’

I've been a father of five boys for nearly a decade now. For a few days last week, though, I felt like a father of 25.



It was while I was serving as a chaperone on a trip of students from Lumen Christi Catholic High School in Indianapolis—where two of my sons are enrolled—to the national March for Life in Washington.

On the morning of the march, the students prayed Morning Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours. As I heard the young people pray the Canticle of Zechariah, the father of St. John the Baptist, one line stood out for me:

“You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins” (Lk 1:76-77).

All of those young men and women were prophets of the Most High.

As they marched along the streets of Washington with thousands of other teenagers and young adults from across the country, they were all prophets preparing by their presence together the joyful, life-affirming way of the Lord.

And as we know from the Old Testament and from the life and death of John the Baptist, being a prophet strikes at the very core of their being. It isn't just a temporary task. It is who they are.

The young men and women from Lumen Christi and their many fellow marchers continue to be prophets of the Most High when they return to their homes, seeking with the help of God's grace to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed among their peers in their daily lives.

This is how the Gospel of life will take root and spread in the years to come throughout our society that has been so dominated for the past half century by a culture of death.

I was humbled as I accompanied Lumen Christi's high schoolers on the march that overflowed with jubilation in the wake of last June's Supreme Court ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. It overturned the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion across the country and thus allowed states to give legal protection to unborn babies.

The young marchers last week, and many of their parents before them, were born and grew up in a society where their lives could have been snuffed out in their mothers' wombs before they ever reached the light of day.

With *Dobbs* instead of *Roe* being the law of the land, all of the marchers can be prophets of the Most High in advocating in their home states for the legal protection of life in the womb.

They can be prophets of the Most High in aiding pregnant mothers who need material, emotional and spiritual support to bring their babies to birth.

And they can be prophets of the Most High by showing love to women who have had abortions in the past, helping them to know the salvation of the Lord in their lives through the forgiveness of their sins.

What Zechariah said of his son St. John the Baptist is true for all of our sons and daughters. They are all called to be prophets of the Most High.

Much of the grace of God that they'll need to fulfill this noble calling comes to them through us, their parents.

I know all too well how daunting this mission of parents can be. But we can go forward in it each day, confident that God gives us grace, too, to accomplish it. †

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, January 29, 2023

- Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13
- 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- Matthew 5:1-12a

The first biblical reading for Mass this weekend is from Zephaniah. These details are known about this prophet: He was the son of Cushi and a descendant of Hezekiah, presumably King Hezekiah, who reigned as king of Judah, the southern Hebrew kingdom centered on Jerusalem, from 715 BC to 687 BC.

Royal ancestry is important. If indeed Zephaniah descended from a king, he may more easily have had access to the royal court and consequently more familiarity with the politics of his day.

Whatever the exact timeframe and circumstances in which this prophecy was written, the plight of the Hebrews was uncertain, both those in the kingdom of Judah and those in the northern kingdom of Israel. The two kingdoms were insignificant and weak. They were easy prey for their mightier neighbors. And as history unfolded, powerful neighbors repeatedly overran them.

The prophets, Zephaniah included, saw the peril facing the chosen people not so much because of policies for conquest of hostile neighboring powers, but rather because of the people's sin.

It was the root of all problems. If the chosen people would remain faithful, regardless of whatever happened, God's protection would prevail.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians furnishes the next reading this weekend. The reading presents to us a paradox. The weak will be exalted. The mighty will be laid low. This paradox is deep and profound, teaching us a fundamental fact of life that runs utterly counter to the human presumption of reality. So, we cannot judge our lives or the world by earthly, human standards but only by Jesus.

For its last reading, the Church this weekend offers from the Gospel of St. Matthew its presentation of the Beatitudes.

(Among the Synoptic Gospels,

St. Luke also has a version of the Beatitudes, differing only slightly from that given in Matthew. Mark does not include the Beatitudes.)

These verses are reminiscent of the Psalms. This fact seats them very much in the history and experience of God's people. It places them in the historical unfolding of revelation.

Always strong in the Old Testament was the hope that one day God would lead the people into life in a wonderful kingdom where God would reign and in which peace, love and justice would prevail.

The Beatitudes describe what such a kingdom would be. They give the same viewpoint as that of Paul in First Corinthians. The Beatitudes reveal the rewards that await the good. In God's kingdom, reality abides, not human hunches or fleeting satisfaction.

Reflection

The readings for this weekend, culminating in the Beatitudes, both celebrate the revelation of God to us, bringing us genuine wisdom about life, and challenge us to be strong and active witnesses to Jesus and the truth of the Gospel.

Zephaniah builds the case that living without regard for God reaps the whirlwind. Paul adds another lesson. The judgments of the world are unsure if not altogether false—always. If we follow the world's assessment of things, we at best dance on the edge of the cliff.

The Beatitudes reveal to us the joy and perfection of life with God, and, by inference, summon us to do our part in redemption. This summons applies to us personally and collectively. We must accept the Lord, the Son of God, the Redeemer, born of Mary at Christmas, seen as God at the Epiphany, the Savior manifested at the Baptism of the Lord.

We are called upon to live the Gospel in our lives, in all that we do, and thereby bring love, justice and hope into the world.

Lent is not long away. The Church gently guides us to question ourselves, to learn of Jesus, for our own good and the good of the world. †

Daily Readings

Monday, January 30

Hebrews 11:32-40

Psalm 31:20-24

Mark 5:1-20

Tuesday, January 31

St. John Bosco, priest

Hebrews 12:1-4

Psalm 22:26-28, 30-32

Mark 5:21-43

Wednesday, February 1

Hebrews 12:4-7, 11-15

Psalm 103:1-2, 13-14, 17-18a

Mark 6:1-6

Thursday, February 2

The Presentation of the Lord

Malachi 3:1-4

Psalm 24:7-10

Hebrews 2:14-18

Luke 2:22-40

or Luke 2:22-32

Friday, February 3

St. Blaise, bishop and martyr

St. Ansgar, bishop

Hebrews 13:1-8

Psalm 27:1, 3, 5, 8-9

Mark 6:14-29

Saturday, February 4

Hebrews 13:15-17, 20-21

Psalm 23:1-6

Mark 6:30-34

Sunday, February 5

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 58:7-10

Psalm 112:4-9

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Matthew 5:13-16

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Limbo is a 'theological theory,' not a defined Church teaching

Q What happened to limbo?
(California)

A Traditionally, limbo was thought of as a "place" in the afterlife that was neither heaven nor purgatory, but which also didn't involve the full sufferings of hell proper. Limbo was meant for the non-baptized who were innocent of any serious personal sin. Generally, limbo was seen as the destiny of young children who died before baptism, and in some cases also as the eternal home of virtuous non-Christians.

The idea of limbo was a sort of compromise between the Church's teachings on the necessity of baptism for salvation, the reality of original sin and our belief in God's justice and mercy. It was posited that while God would never condemn the innocent to suffer eternal torment, the unbaptized could never enter heaven itself.

However, limbo was never a defined Church doctrine.

It was always only a well-established but still speculative theological theory. Limbo is not included in our Creeds, and is never mentioned in our current *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Our liturgical tradition also at times contradicts the concept of limbo for unbaptized infants. For instance, we celebrate the feast of the Holy Innocents every year on Dec. 28, recognizing that these unbaptized babies who died for the sake of Christ can intercede for us from their home in heaven. The Church also has special rites for the funeral Mass of infants who die before baptism.

In more recent times, the International Theological Commission—a panel of professional theologians of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that convene regularly to study various issues and advise the pope—addressed the question of limbo in a document published in 2007.

It notes that while baptism is a necessary component to our faith, "The necessity of sacramental baptism is a necessity of the second order compared to the absolute necessity of God's saving act through Jesus Christ for the final salvation of every human being." And that "Sacramental Baptism is necessary because it is the *ordinary* [my emphasis] means through which a person shares the beneficial effects of Jesus' death and resurrection."

That is, while baptism is the usual and ordinary means through which a person is able to attain eternal life in heaven, the Church still recognizes that God is free to extend his saving grace in an extraordinary way, beyond his promises. The overall conclusion of this document from the commission is that, with respect to the eternal fate of unbaptized infants, we can have confidence in God's tender mercy.

Q I live alone, and every morning and night, I say my prayers out loud. But sometimes I pray silently, just in my head. Are those silent prayers heard? (Georgia)

A God is everywhere and knows everything, so it is safe to say that even our purely silent prayers are heard by God.

Additionally, we are told throughout Scripture that God knows the secrets and thoughts of our hearts. For example, in the book of Psalms, we pray: "Lord, you have probed me, you know me: you know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar. ... Even before a word is on my tongue, Lord, you know it all" (Ps 139:1-2, 4).

Many of our greatest saints, such as St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, place special value on "mental prayer," or a silent, often wordless sharing of our hearts with God. And in the Gospel, Jesus himself tells us: "...when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will repay you" (Mt 6:6).

(Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.) †

My Journey to God

Jesus Calling

By Gina Langferman

I am here
The ever-present guest
I am waiting
Will you stop and rest?
I am calling
Do you hear your name?
I am quiet
Can you be the same?
I am love,
And peace and joy and light
I am strength
To get you through the night
I am grace
to help you through the day
I am wisdom
to guide you in my ways
I am here
please spend some time with me
I am Jesus
waiting patiently—



(Gina Langferman is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: A monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament is displayed on the altar during eucharistic adoration at St. Matthew Church in Dix Hills, N.Y., on Dec. 8, 2022. The service was celebrated in observance of the 33rd annual National Night of Prayer for Life.) (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

MASS

continued from page 1A

offered the homily at the Mass.

He noted that, “While the legal landscape has shifted since our last March for Life Mass” due to the U.S. Supreme Court last June overturning the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion, “the need for vigilance and perseverance in protection of life from the moment of conception to natural death, especially for the unborn, remains ever so essential.

“As the focus on the legal status of abortion volleys between the federal and state courts, as well as being played out in the arena of referendums for voting polls, we must advocate for both woman and fetus, parent and child.”

The archbishop pointed to Scripture as a guide for “how one is called to live a life rooted in faith, hope and charity in discerning and embracing the divine plan of salvation.

“The secret ultimately lies in the ability and willingness to set aside one’s personal will in preferring the will of God in all matters. Rarely does the discernment, ability and willingness come easy,” a fact that is played out in the Old and New Testaments, he added.

“Still, ongoing discernment and conversion, rooted in lifelong formation and education, is essential to the Christian way of life.”

He turned to Pope Francis’ teaching to describe how such a way of life looks: “openness to authentic dialogue, encounter, accompaniment, mutual respect and justice tempered with mercy.”

Archbishop Thompson also looked to the words of the pope’s 2018 apostolic exhortation, “*Gaudete et Exsultate*” (“On the Call to Holiness in Today’s World”): “Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development.

“Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection” (#101).

Christians have a call to be united in mission, a mission that comes from Christ himself, the archbishop said.

“It is for this reason that we gather for this celebration of Mass before embarking on a march,” he noted. “In this eucharistic banquet, we celebrate the real presence of Jesus Christ—body and blood, soul



A portion of the roughly 1,100 people at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis sing a hymn during the final procession of a Mass before the Indiana March for Life on Jan. 23. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

and divinity—the very source and summit of our identity and mission as Catholics, disciples of the Lord.”

He called for Catholics to “remain docile to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in witnessing to the goodness, truth and beauty of God’s plan of salvation. ... We must never tire of caring for people of all nations, persons of every ethnicity, marriage and the family and creation.

“Taking a cue from Mary and Joseph, we must keep Jesus at the center of our lives, homes, relationships and today’s March for Life.”

‘It’s about God ... the author of life’

Before the end of the Mass, Brie Anne Varick, archdiocesan director of the Office of Human Life and Dignity, thanked those who helped coordinate the eucharistic celebration—with a special thank you to the choir from Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis for leading the congregation in song.

Varick also offered a few closing comments.

“We are blessed to have witnessed the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, but there is still work to be done,” she said.

“Today we march for women who deserve better than abortion, men who deserve fatherhood, and for unborn babies who deserve the gift of life and to fulfill the purpose God has anointed on their life. ...

“We march with hope, for we know that the Lord will make a way. And we march with joy, for we know his love for us, and we know his love for all mothers, fathers, and the unborn.

“Let us pray for the conversion of hearts and for Christ to have mercy on us, our state and our nation, that one day we will live in a world where abortion is not only illegal, but unthinkable.”

Bishop Siegel offered a final prayer of blessing upon the congregation.

It was a perfect end to a “beautiful

liturgy,” Goebel said.

“I think it’s great to be at a Mass of more than 1,000 with three bishops. And to worship in such a beautiful space was just awesome.”

Goebel said he was also grateful to the archdiocese for inviting members of the Evansville delegation to serve as a lector and present the gifts during the Mass, to have their bishop concelebrate the Mass and an Evansville deacon to proclaim the Gospel.

“So many good people at the archdiocese made that happen, and they welcomed us so warmly. We’re so grateful,” he said.

“We wanted prayer to be our focus” for the day, Goebel added. “We wanted to focus on the altar of life, because when you do that, it brings home the dignity of life.

“It’s not a political thing. It’s about God. He’s the author of life and gives life its meaning and value.” †

‘We are not yet done’: March for Life holds first event since *Roe* reversal

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—Tens of thousands of pro-life advocates descended upon the nation’s capital for the 50th March for Life on Jan. 20—the first national

march since the overturning of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that initially prompted the annual demonstration.

Standing on the event stage at the National Mall, with the U.S. Capitol visible in the background, Jeanne Mancini, March for Life president, told attendees at a rally prior to the march that “the country and world changed” when *Roe* was reversed in June 2022. But she said the annual March for Life would continue in Washington until abortion is “unthinkable.”

“While the March began as a response to *Roe*, we don’t end as a response to *Roe* being overturned,” Mancini said. “Why? Because we are not yet done.”

The national March for Life first took place in Washington in 1974 in response to the *Roe* decision legalizing abortion nationwide the previous year. The protest has taken place in Washington each year since, with a smaller-in-scale event during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

The 2023 event was the first national March for Life since the high court’s June 2022 ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* that overturned *Roe* and returned the matter of regulating or restricting abortion to state legislatures.

Pre-march rally speakers included Jonathan Roumie, known for his role as Jesus in the television series “The Chosen,” former Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy, Democratic Connecticut State Rep. Trenee McGee, and Gianna Emanuela Molla, the daughter of St. Gianna Beretta Molla. Canonized in 2004, St. Gianna gave her life for Giana Emanuela, choosing to move

forward with her fourth pregnancy even after doctors discovered a tumor in her uterus.

Roumie took a picture of the crowd behind him from the stage, telling marchers to tag themselves on social media, and quipping he is the “TV Jesus,” not the real one.

“God is real and he is completely in love with you,” he said, adding that each person is individually loved by God.

“Remember my dear friends, we know how the story ends: God won,” Roumie said.

The rally also featured some lawmakers from the U.S. House of Representatives. Rep. Chris Smith of New Jersey, a Catholic Republican and co-chair of the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus, said at the rally, “Future generations will someday look back on us and wonder how and why a society that bragged about its commitment to human rights could have legally sanctioned” abortion.

“The injustice of abortion need not be forever, and with your continued work and prayers, it will not be,” Smith said.

Speaking with OSV News at the march, Kristan Hawkins, president of the pro-life group Students for Life of America, said the next front of her organization’s activism will focus on fighting the spread of medication abortion. Hawkins said the pro-life movement should also focus on broadening the social safety net and its remaining goals at the federal level, such as stripping Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest single abortion provider, of taxpayer funds. †

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The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

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If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

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- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

Investing with Faith/Kimberly Pohovey

Consider leaving a Catholic legacy with a bequest in your will

Each year seems to pass more quickly than the last. And yet even when we know the lay of the land, life is still full of surprises. Some of the things we've



worked toward for a long time finally come to fruition. The kids in our lives grow up and before we know it, they're starting families of their own. And many are blessed to amass a nice nest egg for retirement or increasing our stewardship. God is good.

We are grateful for unexpected graces and opportunities as our lives unfold. As we get older, it's natural to ask ourselves, "What kind of legacy will I leave behind?" and wonder how people will remember us when we are gone.

Perhaps the best answer, though, is hidden in a deeper question: What does your faith story say about you? If you have lived your faith by cultivating a spirit of gratitude and sharing the blessings you have received with others, then you may want to consider making a final gift to the Church through a bequest.

The Psalmist asks it this way: "How can I repay the Lord for all the great good done for me?" (Ps 116:12)

Of course, none of us will ever be able to repay God for all the blessings we have received. Still, there may be no better way to thank God than to give a gift that helps to ensure that the ministries and initiatives that have brought his loving presence to us are there for others when they need them.

A planned legacy gift can benefit your favorite Catholic ministry, school or parish—those that hold a special place in your heart or have served you

and your family over the course of your lifetime. Alternatively, you may choose to leave a small portion of your estate to the endowment funds administered by the Catholic Community Foundation (CCF) to provide long-term support of the Church's mission here in central and southern Indiana.

A bequest gift at the end of your life to support Christ's mission makes a lasting statement about you and what was most important during your lifetime. A bequest testifies to your generosity and your commitment to doing good. It concretely expresses your values to both your loved ones and your community. In that way, a bequest belongs to the testament part of your "last will and testament."

Maybe you are a lifelong Catholic devoted to your faith and Church. Or maybe you discovered—or rediscovered—your Catholic faith in a quest for something

more. Wherever your journey has taken you, Christ Jesus and his Church has been there to guide and support your every step. Much of that was possible because of the generosity of those who came before.

Like many Catholics, you've done your best to witness to your faith in Jesus Christ in both word and deed. Making a bequest is an opportunity to steward your blessings in a way that proclaims what you believe one last time. It's a chance to leave this world a little better and more compassionate than you found it.

To learn more about leaving a Catholic legacy of generosity and faith through a bequest, contact the Catholic Community Foundation at 317-236-1482 or ccf@archindy.org.

(Kimberly Pohovey is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †

Outpouring of grief, prayers as Lunar New Year massacre kills 11, wounds others

MONTEREY PARK, Calif. (OSV News)—"With the whole family of God here in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, I am praying for the victims of this violence," Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez said in a statement following a mass shooting that left 11 people dead and at least 9 more wounded in Monterey Park, Calif., late on Jan. 21.

Archbishop Gomez, who was already scheduled to celebrate Mass at 10 a.m. local time to mark the Lunar New Year at St. Bridget Chinese Catholic Church in LA's Chinatown, added: "We pray for those killed and injured in this shooting; we ask that God stay close to their families and loved ones. We pray for the wounded to be healed, and we ask that God give strength and guidance to the doctors and nurses who are caring for them."

A shooter fired into the crowd at a dance ballroom as guests celebrated on the eve of the Lunar New Year. The wounded were taken to local hospitals around the city, which is east of Los Angeles. Their condition ranged from "critical to serious," said Capt. Andrew Meyer of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department.

He told reporters in a news briefing early on Jan. 22 that it was too early in the investigation to know the motive of the shooter, who was found dead with an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound after a stand-off with police in Torrance, Calif. The suspect was identified as 72-year-old Huu Can Tran.

According to data from the city's website, the population of Monterey Park is 65.6% Asian. Festivities throughout the day drew thousands of people to the city neighborhood where the dance studio is located.

In his statement, the archbishop prayed for God to give "wisdom and prudence to law enforcement and public officials working to make sense of the violence and keep our communities safe."

The archbishop said they were also praying for peace: "Peace in the hearts of those who are troubled. Peace in the hearts of those who are afraid and hurting today, and peace for those whose faith has been shaken."

"We pray also for peace in our own hearts," he continued. "We pray that we might feel God's love and know that he will deliver us from every evil."

The archbishop concluded by asking

for the intercession of Mary, the Blessed Mother, "to be a mother to us in this hour of pain and uncertainty."

The mass shooting took place just a half mile from St. Stephen Martyr Catholic Church in Monterey Park. †

HISPANIC

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It is not a secret that in our archdiocese there is a need for vocations. The more our community grows in central and the southern Indiana, the more the need for pastors to guide us on our journey of faith.

The phenomenon of migration from Latin American countries to North America is an increasingly tangible reality, and we need as a Church to be prepared to offer spiritual well-being to

many desolate, hungry and thirsty souls. They need not only physical food, but true food that gives health to the soul and body: the Eucharist.

Parents, if you feel God is speaking to you through this column, please consider a vocation to the priesthood or the consecrated life for your children. Encourage an expression of God's love in your home and pray together so that our Hispanic community may be a seedbed of vocations. Peace and good!

(Felix Navarrete is archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry.) †

HISPANO

continuado de pagina 8A

de 30 millones de hispanos católicos. Sin embargo de acuerdo con la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, solamente un 15% de las ordenaciones sacerdotales proviene de raíces hispanas.

No es un secreto que en nuestra arquidiócesis existe la necesidad de vocaciones, mientras más crece nuestra comunidad en el área metropolitana y zonas aledañas, más crece la necesidad de pastores que guíen nuestro camino de fe, el fenómeno de migración de nuestros países hacia norteamérica es una realidad cada vez más palpable y necesitamos

como Iglesia, estar preparados para ofrecer un bienestar espiritual a tantas almas desoladas, hambrientas y sedientas no solo del alimento físico sino del verdadero alimento que da salud al alma y al cuerpo: la Eucaristía.

Si usted siente que Dios le habla a través de este mensaje, considere la vocación del sacerdocio o la vida consagrada para sus hijos, fomente la expresión del amor de Dios en su hogar y oremos juntos para que nuestra comunidad Hispana sea semillero de vocaciones. Paz y bien!

(Felix Navarrete es el coordinador del Ministerio Hispano en el Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis.) †

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Employment



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MARCH

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the Statehouse, joyfully calling out pro-life chants and carrying life-affirming signs.

Students from Catholic schools in Brownsburg, Dearborn County, Indianapolis, Madison, New Albany, Oldenburg, Ripley County and more, as well as from the Lafayette Diocese, made for a predominantly young crowd.

Joining the march for the first time were 120 high school students and chaperones from the Diocese of Evansville, Ind.—along with their shepherd, Bishop Joseph M. Siegel.

The overturning of *Roe* means that “laws regarding the rights of the unborn go to the states now,” said Jeremy Goebel, the diocese’s director of youth and young adult ministry.

“We did have groups who went to [Washington] D.C.” for the national March for Life, he said. “But we wanted with my office and with the bishop to promote things at the local level because that’s where the need is, and to show you can do things locally and have an impact.”

Roe years were ‘pre-season’

Any mention of the overturning of *Roe* brought jubilant cries from the rally participants.

“Where were you when you heard that *Roe v. Wade* was overturned?” Mike Fichter, president and CEO of Indiana Right to Life, asked the crowd. “What an electric moment in the nation’s history!”

Indiana U.S. Senator Todd Young agreed.

“I think [pro-choice defenders] thought we would go away” with the reversal of *Roe*, he said from the Statehouse steps. “But we’re still here in what we’re all proud to call the post-*Roe* era!”

Once *Roe* was overturned, “We were able to get three [pro-life] laws reinstated in Indiana by going to court,” said Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita. Because of those laws, abortion based on discrimination and dismemberment abortions are outlawed, and aborted babies must be given a proper burial.

“And for two weeks in September, abortions were largely illegal in Indiana” until a lawsuit put a temporary injunction on the state’s new law protecting most pre-born children, he added.

“We’re fighting that [case] now,” said Rokita, referring to oral arguments heard by the Indiana Supreme Court on Jan. 19. (See related article on page 2A.) “There’s another case coming, but we’ll do our legal work on that one, too. Pray that the Indiana Supreme Court gets this [issue] right.”

Those legal battles are indicative of a message repeated by many speakers at the rally: the fight for pre-born lives is just beginning.

“The reversal of *Roe* was not the end of the battle—it was chapter one of the new phase of the battle,” said Fichter.

Rally speaker Mary Carmen Zahrajsek echoed his statement.

“Every year for 49 years we had *Roe v. Wade* as a stumbling block,” said Zahrajsek, Indiana regional coordinator for Students for Life. “I’m sorry to break it to you—that was the pre-season. The fight for lives starts now.”

That fight is a matter of human rights, she said, noting that “human rights should not kill other humans, that is plain and simple. Human life begins at conception, and human rights begin at conception.”

‘God gives each of us a purpose’

Mark Hublar believes that human rights begin in the womb. But some believe that right does not extend to those with disabilities.

“When I was born in 1964, the doctor told my mom and dad, ‘Mark has Down syndrome. Don’t take him home. Put him in an institution,’” the member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany told the

crowd at the rally. “I am not broken. I don’t need to be fixed. I have a purpose.”

In fact, Hublar went on to earn a college degree in public speaking. With the help of his family, he created a business that takes him around the country advocating for meaningful employment for those with disabilities.

He shared more about his story during a March for Life Vigil the day prior at St. Elizabeth Seton Church in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. The vigil, organized by the Lafayette Diocese, also included adoration, prayer, music and a eucharistic procession.

From the Statehouse steps, Hublar shared sobering statistics with the crowd regarding abortion and Down syndrome.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, about 6,000 babies are born with the condition each year. But a March 18, 2022, report by the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee points out that an estimated 60% to 90% of pre-born children diagnosed with Down syndrome are aborted annually.

“God loves all of us,” Hublar told the crowd. “God gives each of us purpose. I believe that all life has value.”

Some question the value of life conceived in rape. “People ask, ‘Well, what about the 13-year-old who was raped?’” said Serena Dyksen at the rally. “I am the 13-year-old that was raped and taken for an abortion.”

“What people didn’t tell my parents when they took me for an abortion was that that trauma would follow me for the rest of my life.”

Through her own journey of healing, the northern Indiana resident created She Found His Grace abortion recovery ministry.

“With more than 60 million abortions” since 1973, she said, “there are millions of mothers and fathers out there who are hurting and suffering trauma. I want them to know that there is hope.”

Melissa Coles, a national pro-life advocate whose decision to choose life and offer her son for adoption is shared in the documentary *I Lived on Parker Avenue* and in the movie *Lifemark*, echoed Dyksen’s words.

“When they fight [at protests], they’re angry, they’re yelling, they’re screaming,” she said. “They’re hurting, but they don’t realize they’re hurting. ... That’s why when we fight, we have to fight with love.”

We must live out message ‘love them both’

Love is key in the pro-life movement, said Fichter. “We’ve done a lot of research over the last year and half,” he said. “The world at large ... [is] looking to see if we really mean what we say. We can’t just say, ‘Love them both.’ We have to live it in showing compassion for pregnant mothers and their unborn babies.”

Senator Young noted the post-*Roe* need for “more effort and energy for advocacy, of course.”

“But we’re also going to need more of it to send a message of love, of neighborliness, to ensure that this movement is committed to persuasion. We have hearts and minds that need to be shaped and changed—and that’s even harder work.”

It’s work that Sara Cabrera takes seriously. Her mother was a young, unwed woman far from family when she considered aborting her oldest daughter.



Mark Hublar, standing behind a music stand, fires up the crowd at a rally following the Indiana March for Life in Indianapolis on Jan. 23. Behind him at left is Mary Carmen Zahrajsek, Indiana regional director for Students for Life. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)



Members of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis carry a banner during the Indiana March for Life.

Last fall, Sara and her friend Olivia Murrey, both 15, founded the Indianapolis-area Homeschoolers 4 Life group. “This cause is all about showing up, showing support for moms and their babies and to other [pro-life] students to let them know that we support them,” said Sara, whose family along with Olivia’s worships at St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville.

The group wants to “show the leaders of our country and the world that we as young people are here to fight the injustice of abortion because we *are* the pro-life generation,” said Sara.

Goebel called the speakers “gifted and perfect for the rally.”

While time is needed for his Evansville group to process the experience and to receive more formal feedback, he said, “The general response is overwhelmingly positive.”

“We wanted to create an impactful experience for people to appreciate the dignity of life a little bit more. I think the Mass, march and rally accomplished that.”

(Websites for groups mentioned in this article include *She Found His Grace* at www.shefoundhisgrace.org; *Homeschoolers 4 Life* at *Homeschoolers 4 Life on Facebook*; documentary and movie of Melissa Coles’ pro-life story at www.ilivedonparkerave.com and lifemarkmovie.com; and Mark Hublar’s disabilities advocacy business at www.markjhublarspeaks.com.) †

Photo below: A group of 120 high school students and adult chaperones from the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., pose in front of the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis after the Indiana March for Life and rally on Jan. 23. (Submitted photo by Megan Erbacher/The Message)

