

Praying for a peaceful solution in Iran and Iraq

Pope Francis and the U.S. Catholic bishops plead for prayers and dialogue as tensions escalate in the Middle East.
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The CATHOLIC MISSOURIAN

January 10, 2020 • Vol. 63 No. 14

Newspaper of the Diocese of Jefferson City

Bishop's India pilgrimage highlights unity, mission



By Jay Nies

Jefferson City

Wise men from the East and the West arrived at the life-size Nativity scene outside the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Rosary in Kunkuri, India.

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight stood in procession with Roman Catholic bishops from Chhattisgarh province and beyond for a Mass of great joy and solemnity during the Christmas Octave.

It was the 50th anniversary of the cathedral's dedication.

Thousands filled the outdoor plaza and the imposing, mid-century modern edifice, reputed to be the second-largest cathedral in Asia Pacific, on Dec. 30.

Bishop McKnight was on pilgrimage to the Diocese of Jashpur, with which the Jefferson City diocese has been cultivating a mission partnership since 2012.

Father Alex Ekka, a priest of the Jashpur diocese, currently serves in the Jefferson City diocese. Father Angelus Minj and the late Father Gregory Tigga previously served here.

The people of the Jefferson City diocese are helping pay to build churches and chapels, open schools and missions and prepare seminarians for Priesthood in the Jashpur diocese.

Bishop McKnight was an honored guest for the Dec. 30 Mass, as well as the blessing of the newly completed outdoor Stations of the Cross, and the cultural celebration that followed.

Also during his weeklong visit, he presided at the Ordination Mass for five priests — two for the Jashpur diocese, one for the neighboring Diocese of Jammu Kashmir, and two members of the Society of Jesus.

People from the Jefferson City diocese sponsored two of the priests through seminary formation.

See INDIA, page 17

A young parishioner greets Bishop W. Shawn McKnight as he arrives in Kunkuri, India, on pilgrimage to the Diocese of Jashpur on Dec. 28. With them is Father Alex Ekka, a priest of the Jashpur diocese who is serving as pastor of St. Ann parish in Warsaw and the Ss. Peter and Paul mission in Cole Camp. — Photo by Jake Seifert

New deacons to play larger role in bishop's plan to draw Hispanic Catholics deeper into parish life

By Jay Nies

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight intends to make full use of the nine Spanish-speaking deacons he ordained last year to minister better to the growing communities of Hispanic Catholics in this diocese.

Specifically, he will allow properly trained, Spanish-speaking deacons to preside at canonically sanctioned Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest in Spanish in our parishes when needed.

Such services, intended for extreme circumstances that hopefully will be mitigated as more priests learn Spanish, include readings, prayers, preaching, hymns and the distribution of Holy Communion.

"These deacons will soon be receiving the proper training to use the ritual approved by the Holy See for this pastoral need," the bishop wrote to priests, pastoral ministers and parish life coordinators of the diocese Dec. 4.

Hispanic deacons will lead a Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest on weekends whenever a Mass in Spanish cannot be provided in parishes with large Hispanic populations.

The bishop said that ideally, Mass in Spanish should take place at least once a month in parishes where there are sufficient numbers of Hispanics, with a Hispanic permanent deacon leading worship on the remaining weekends of the month.

These deacons will also work on identifying further avenues of outreach and respond to other needs of Hispanic communities, including sacramental and general catechetical formation, pastoral counseling and material assistance.

The Hispanic deacons will also assist with communications among the pastor, parish life collaborator, people of the

See HISPANIC, page 15

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01/10/20



Principal for Catholic High School

The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau is seeking a **Principal for Notre Dame High School** in Cape Girardeau, MO, effective **July 1, 2020**. Qualified applicant must be an Active Catholic, have Missouri principal certification, have a Master's degree in School Administration (or be working toward it) with 3-5 years of Catholic school experience. Administrative experience preferred. To request an application packet please contact Anne Buckley at the Catholic Center, (417) 866-0841, abuckley@dioscg.org.

Receptionist Position Opening



Due to an internal promotion, the Diocese of Jefferson City has an immediate opening for a receptionist at its offices on West Main St. in Jefferson City. The successful candidate will be providing a friendly, professional and efficient welcome to guests and callers to the Catholic Center. Core duties include:

- Answer and forward telephone calls
- Greet all incoming guests
- Maintain calendar and location of meetings being held at the Chancery
- Perform data entry and other administrative tasks
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality

This is a full time position. Employees of the Diocese of Jefferson City enjoy a comprehensive benefit package including life and disability insurance, medical, dental and vision and matching 403(b) plan. Applicants should send a resume to HRDir@diojeffcity.org.

Principal Needed



Sacred Heart School is a Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade Catholic school located in Sedalia, Mo. Established in 1882, our vision is to provide Extraordinary Catholic Education, Through Christ, For All. Sacred Heart School offers a high-quality Catholic education to willing students of all faiths and economic backgrounds.

The school is seeking a highly effective, transformational principal for the 2020-2021 academic year to drive change and continue building our academic culture. The selected candidate will have a proven track record of increasing and accelerating student achievement and evaluating and implementing effective curriculum and will be prepared to lead students, staff, and the community towards success.

The Principal is part of a three-person leadership team, with the School President, Principal, and Assistant Principal collaborating in a comprehensive educational agenda. Candidates must be active practicing Catholics.

Letters of application and resumes should be directed to Dr. Mark Register @ mregister@gogremlins.com.

Seeking Christ for Our Nation

The next "Seeking Christ for our Nation" Masses will be celebrated on **Tuesday, January 21**, at 6 p.m. in Our Lady of the Snows Church in Mary's Home.

Pray for deceased priests

Jan. 14 — **Fr. Senan M. O'Connell**, Shrine of St. Patrick, St. Patrick (1973)

Jan. 16 — **Fr. Krsto J. Jelenic**, St. Michael, Kahoka (1978)

Jan. 17 — **Fr. Michael M. O'Donovan**, St. Elizabeth Hospital, Hannibal (1979); **Fr. Peter Walsh**, Sacred Heart, Vandalia; and St. John, Laddonia (2011)

Jan. 23 — **Fr. Kenneth E. Brockel**, St. William, Perry; St. Frances Cabrini, Paris; and St. Paul Historic Church, Center (2002)

Epiphany Proclamation

Announcement for Easter and moveable feasts for 2020

The proclamation of the date of Easter and the other moveable feasts on Epiphany dates from a time when calendars were not readily available.

It was necessary to make known the date of Easter in advance, since many celebrations of the liturgical year depend on its

date. The number of Sundays that follow Epiphany, the date of Ash Wednesday, and the number of Sundays that follow Pentecost are all computed in relation to Easter.

On the Epiphany of the Lord, after the proclamation of the Gospel, a deacon or cantor, in keeping with an ancient practice of Holy Church, announces from the ambo the moveable feasts of the current year:

"On the thirty-first day of May, the feast of Pentecost.

"On the fourteenth day of June, the feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

"On the twenty-ninth day of November, the First Sunday of the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Monroe City Pro-life March

DATE: January 19
TIME: 5 pm

The 19th annual Pro-life March in Monroe City will be held on Sunday, Jan. 19. It will start at 5 p.m. with a prayer service in the Knights of Columbus Hall, 109 Lawn St., near Holy Rosary Church.

Weather permitting, there will be a candle-lit march, followed by refreshments in the Hall.

Pilgrimage to the Shrines of French Canada

with Fr. Matthew Flatley

»»»» JULY 6-11, 2020 ««««

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Official newspaper — Diocese of Jefferson City
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"A diocesan paper serves as a bond of unity by publishing diocesan happenings and promulgating official regulations and decrees. It also plays a teaching role by reporting notable events of a religious and secular nature, and interpreting them in the light of Christian principles."

— Bishop Joseph M. Marling C.P.S., July 7, 1957

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight
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Teaching Positions

St. Clement School near Bowling Green, Mo. is seeking applications for the following positions:

- A long-term substitute teacher beginning in March, 2020.
- A 7th and 8th grade teacher for the 2020-21 school year.

Applicants may drop off resumes at the school or parish office. For questions, please call the school at 573-324-2166.



DIOCESE seeks SUPERINTENDENT of CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau in Missouri has an opening for **Diocesan Superintendent of Schools**, effective **July 1, 2020**. The diocesan school system includes 23 elementary and 3 high schools. Requirements: Active Catholic, advanced degree in Educational Administration, certifiable in State of Missouri, and experience in Catholic school administration, preferably on a diocesan level. Ability to promote Catholic mission of the schools is a high priority. Must also be willing to travel throughout the diocese. Competitive salary, excellent health benefits, and retirement based on diocesan guidelines. Send cover letter and resume to Janet L. Smith, Chancellor, 601 S. Jefferson, Springfield, MO, 65806. You may also call (417) 866-0841 or Email jansmith@dioscg.org to request an application packet.




St. Joseph Church in Slater has a new metal framed sign gracing the East 240 entrance to Slater. It was generously donated by a St. Joseph parishioner in honor of his recently deceased wife.



Bishop McKnight's Calendar

JANUARY

- Dec. 27-Jan. 12** Mission Trip to Diocese of Jashpur, India
- Jan. 12-18** Ad Limina, Rome
- Jan. 23** Meet Fr. Fadi Al-Mimass of the Catholic Melkite Community in Houston, Texas, 9:30 am, Catholic Center, Jefferson City
- Jan. 24** Missouri Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee Meeting, 10 am, MCC Office, Jefferson City
- Jan. 25** Guest on KWOS 9.50 AM Open Air Saturday with Hal Dulle Talk Show, 8 am, Jefferson City
- Jan. 26** Mass & Bless New Bell Tower, 8:15 am, St. Jude Parish, Richland
- Jan. 27** Keynote Speaker, Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Meeting of Dan C. Coppin General Assembly, 6 pm, Knights of Columbus Hall, Jefferson City
- Jan. 28** Annual Knights of Columbus Religious and Teacher Appreciation Supper, 6 pm, Knights of Columbus Hall, Jefferson City
- Jan. 29** Dinner with Seminarian Parents, 5:30 pm, Catholic Center, Jefferson City
- Jan. 30** Diocesan Finance Council Meeting, 11 am, Catholic Center, Jefferson City



Official Decree

The Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight makes the following appointments:

CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

PASTORS

Reverend Alexander Gabriel, from pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Eldon and Our Lady of Snows Parish in Mary's Home, to pastor of St. Andrew Parish in Tipton and Annunciation Parish in California.

Reverend Callistus C. Okoroji, from pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Loose Creek and St. Louis of France Parish in Bonnots Mill to pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Eldon and Our Lady of Snows Parish in Mary's Home.

Reverend Anthony R. Rinaldo, from pastor of St. Andrew Parish in Tipton and Annunciation Parish in California, to pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Loose Creek and St. Louis of France Parish in Bonnots Mill.

These appointments are effective January 28, 2020.

PERMANENT DEACONS

Deacon Michael S. Brooks, to assist the pastor of Holy Cross Parish and School in Cuba, and to continue assisting the pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Rolla.

Deacon Chad R. Lewis, to assist the pastor of Visitation Parish in Vienna, St. Aloysius

Parish in Argyle, Holy Guardian Angels Parish in Brinktown and the Mission of St. Boniface in Koeltztown, and to continue assisting the pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Rolla.

Deacon Thomas C. Manion, to assist the pastor of Visitation Parish in Vienna, St. Aloysius Parish in Argyle, Holy Guardian Angels Parish

in Brinktown and the Mission of St. Boniface in Koeltztown, and to continue assisting the pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Rolla.

Deacon Matthew K. McLaughlin, to assist the pastor of Visitation Parish in Vienna, St. Aloysius Parish in Argyle, Holy Guardian Angels Parish in Brinktown and the Mission of St. Boniface in Koeltztown, and to continue assisting the pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Rolla.

These appointments are effective December 18, 2019.

Given at the Chancery this 18th day of December, 2019.

Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight, S.T.D.
Bishop of Jefferson City

Mrs. Constance Schepers
Chancellor

Bishop McKnight's January prayer intention for our Local Church

For an increase in Christian unity, racial harmony, and respect for the dignity of all human life; that Christians everywhere may work together to promote peace in our homes and communities throughout the world.

Intención del mes de enero del Obispo McKnight por nuestra Iglesia Local

Por un aumento en la unidad cristiana, la armonía racial y el respeto a la dignidad de toda vida humana; que los cristianos en todas partes podamos trabajar juntos para promover la paz en nuestros hogares y comunidades en todo el mundo.



Please be so kind as to make this a part of your group and private prayer.

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40 Days for Life founder to keynote Midwest March for Life in J.C.

DATE: February 1
TIME: 7:45 am - 3 pm

Pre-rally at 9:30 a.m., March at 10, rally in the Capitol at 10:45, pro-life apologetics workshop at 1 p.m.

By Jay Nies

Abortion claims the lives of millions of unborn children each year.

Nationally-recognized Catholic activist David Bereit will share concrete success stories and strategies for ending the bloodshed once and for all, during the 10th annual Midwest March for Life on Saturday, Feb. 1, in Jefferson City.

The founder of the immensely successful 40 Days for Life global campaign will be the featured speaker at a post-march rally in the State Capitol and will lead an afternoon workshop on pro-life apologetics.

Everyone is encouraged to take part in any or all of the activities scheduled throughout the day.

Numerous life-affirming booths and vendors will be open from 7:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Selinger Centre exhibit hall near St. Peter Church, 216 Broadway St., across from the

Capitol.

As in years past, St. Joseph Radio will record the march and offer religious articles for sale.

Coffee, hot chocolate, and pastries will be available for a nominal price.

Gregory Thompson of St. Peter parish in Marshall will lead the praying of the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet outside the Selinger Centre at 8 a.m.

Also at 8 a.m., prominent pro-life activist Bonnie Lee will organize a Prayer Walk inside the Capitol Rotunda. Prayer teams will be assigned to various offices, praying for lawmakers, state executives, families and staff and presenting a card of encouragement.

Mrs. Lee, a retired nurse, is affiliated with the Missouri Baptist Convention Executive Board and numerous other pro-life groups in Missouri.

March and rally

A pre-march rally with prayers and several inspirational speakers will begin outside the Selinger Centre at 9:30 a.m., followed by a pro-life march from there through downtown Jefferson City to the Capitol.

Participants will march for about three-quarters of a mile, passing the Governor's Mansion, the Supreme Court Building and several state office buildings and Jefferson City landmarks.

Members of the clergy will lead the march, accompanied by an honor guard of Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus.

The rally featuring Mr. Bereit's presentation will start at 10:45 a.m. in the Capitol Rotunda.

Other speakers will include:

•**Illinois state Rep. Avery Bourne**, the youngest lawmaker ever to be sworn into the Illinois General Assembly;

•**Katrina Gallic**, development director for the National March for Life in Washington, D.C.;

•**Jacinta Florence**, Missouri regional coordinator for Students for Life America;

•**Susan Klein**, executive director of Missouri Right to Life;

•**Missouri Governor Mike Parson**;

•**Bridget Van Means**, president and vision leader for Thrive St. Louis Express Women's Healthcare; and

•**Stacy Washington**, Life-zette TV host (www.stacyontheright.com)

theright.com)

Informative afternoon

Starting at noon, chili and hotdogs prepared by Knights of Columbus Precious Blood Council 4454 in Fulton will be available for a nominal price in the Selinger Centre.

A student youth rally led by Jacinta Florence of Students for Life will be held from 1 to 1:45 p.m. in lower level of the Selinger Centre.

Also from 1 to 1:45 p.m., David Bereit will lead a workshop for adults on effectively arguing the pro-life position, in the Father Ahrens Room of the St. Peter Parish Life Center in the lower level of the parish rectory.

Father Dylan Schrader, pastor of St. Brendan parish in Mexico, will offer a Mass for Life at 2 p.m. in St. Peter Church.

A municipal parking garage is located at 200 Madison St., a few blocks from the Capitol.

Registration is requested for the afternoon workshops in order to provide enough materials.

"Made for this moment"

Mr. Bereit now works in partnership with FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, to help prepare the next generation of leaders in numerous high-impact ministry organizations.

His powerful delivery and message of faith-fueled vigilance set hearts on fire when he spoke at the 2019 Missouri Catholic Conference Annual Assembly in Jefferson City.

"You were made for this very moment!" he thundered in his keynote presentation. "You were made to lead! You were made to advocate for our faith and the values we hold dear.

"There are some ministries that only YOU can start!" he insisted. "There are some people that only YOU can reach. There are some organizations that only YOU can take to the next level. There are some politicians that only YOU can influence. There are some messages that only YOU can effectively articulate."

For the March for Life, he'll share insights into how he started and led the 40 Days for Life Campaign (www.40daysforlife.com)

through its first decade, building it into the largest and one of the most effective grassroots pro-life mobilization ever to confront the abortion industry.

It has grown into a network of more than 2,000 local leaders and 750,000 volunteers in 800 cities across all 50 American states and 56 nations.

In the process, 40 Days for Life has helped save thousands of pre-born babies, close more than 100 abortion clinics and lead scores of workers out of the abortion industry, including Abby Johnson, subject of the recent movie "Unplanned."

The key is the combination of prayer and sacrifice, community outreach, and public presence on the sidewalks outside abortion clinics throughout two concentrated, 40-day-long campaigns per year.

He took his message to the sidewalk outside Planned Parenthood in Columbia in 2016 during a 40 Days for Life prayer vigil.

"You are the ones who are writing the pages of history," he said at that time. "It's not a matter of if abortion will end, it's a matter of when."

"And when people tell the stories about it, they will remember you who were on the front lines in these crucial days — when lives were being saved, when the tide was turning."

From the start

This will be the 10th annual Midwest March for Life in Jefferson City.

Dr. Gregory Thompson of St. Peter parish in Marshall organized the first march in 2010 when he realized that most people were unable to travel to Washington D.C. for the national March for Life.

He handed the event over to Mike and Kathy Forck, members of St. Andrew parish in Holts Summit and directors of the 40 Days for Life Campaign in Columbia.

Annual attendance continues to grow, with people of all ages traveling to Jefferson City from throughout the state and from neighboring states.

Call (573) 340-8444 or visit the Midwest March for Life website for information or to register.

www.midwestmarchforlife.com

Steve Angrisano to lead retreat for adults in youth ministry

DATE: February 8
TIME: 10 am - 3 pm

Nationally-renowned Catholic composer, performer, evangelizer and youth minister Steve Angrisano will lead a diocesan retreat for youth ministry and catechetical leaders on Saturday, Feb. 8, in Columbia.

It will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 903 Bernadette Drive near Interstate 70 and Stadium Boulevard.

The theme will be "Keeping the Faith While Teaching the Faith."

Mr. Angrisano will present an intimate day of story, song and reflection.

"This retreat is certain to be a great spiritual boost for anyone teaching the faith," said John DeLaporte, diocesan director of youth ministry and



Steve Angrisano

religious education.

He noted that too often, people get so caught up in teaching the faith to others that they can struggle to keep the faith themselves.

"With great spiritual and practical suggestions on keeping our own faith strong, the people on this retreat will explore prag-

matic ways to impart the faith to young people while nurturing their own spiritual lives in service to others," he said.

Registration and a light breakfast will start at 9:30 a.m.

Mass will be offered at 2 p.m.

See ANGRISANO, page 15

Australian Catholics seek prayers as fires rage in four states

By David Ryan and Jordan Grantham

Catholic News Service

As some of the worst wildfires in Australian history rage across four states, thousands of people in affected areas in New South Wales and Victoria continue to be evacuated to safety.

Soaring temperatures, often higher than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and a protracted drought have contributed to an unprecedented national emergency which, by Christmas, had already seen more than 14.5 million acres of forest and rural land burned.

Amid conditions regularly described as catastrophic, fires have continued to rage in hundreds of locations in Western Australia, New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria states for months.

Marie Burton, a parishioner of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, in the New South Wales Diocese of Wagga, lives on a farm in Jingellic, near the border with Victoria border. In late December and early January, Jingellic was surrounded by fire twice.

"We know so many Catholic people who are being affected. There's a lot of suffering going on, and we're continuing to pray," Burton said in tears.

"Twice our home was saved. On Monday evening — and again on Tuesday.

"The fire came up over the hill but there was no stopping it. My husband was getting things out of the house, but he was told to just get out of there.

"We didn't know for 24 hours (what happened) but luckily, it was saved."

Burton has taken shelter with her sister's family, the Darlows, including nephew Matthew Darlow, a member of the local brigade of the Rural Fire Service. The Darlows live at Lankeys Creek, approximately 12 miles north of Jingellic. While staying with her relatives, Burton has been cooking at a shelter to feed firefighters.

"We just need to band together, get the fires out and support those who have lost their homes and livelihoods," said Darlow.

"We're waiting on a change in wind that could affect things,

and an increase in temperature, tonight or tomorrow," said Darlow, who asked Catholics around the world to pray.

"Offer up prayers for the people who've lost their lives and those who've lost their livelihoods so that they can rebuild as quickly as possible," he said. "And pray particularly for widespread rain across the whole country."

Bishop Shane Mackinlay of the Diocese of Sandhurst expressed concern about "the impact that fires have already had on communities and by the anxiety that the threat of fire is causing."

In a statement Jan. 3, he urged "political and community leaders to continue efforts to identify and respond to the underlying causes that have contributed to the heightened risks we are facing this summer, (and) we pray for those who lost their lives, and for the safe recovery of people who are missing."

The fires have been burning since August and have destroyed an area comparable to the combined region of the Netherlands and Belgium.

By Jan. 3, thousands of people were given less than 48 hours to evacuate fire-ravaged coastal communities in New South Wales. With the heat forecast for 111 degrees Fahrenheit Jan. 4, the fires were expected to worsen.

More than 2,500 buildings have been razed and at least 20 people — 16 from New South Wales, two from Victoria and two from South Australia — have died. Officials fear the toll could rise steeply, with Victorian emergency services saying 28 people are missing in the state.

Smoke clouds, which can be seen from space, have reached New Zealand, nearly 2,500 miles away across the Tasman Sea.

The Gippsland region in Victoria's east has seen convoys of people escorted by police and emergency services personnel evacuating from towns



Rural Fire Service crews engage in property protection during wildfires along the Old Hume Highway near the town of Tahmoor, Australia, outside Sydney, Dec. 19, 2019. Wildfires have been burning since August and have destroyed an area comparable to the combined region of the Netherlands and Belgium.

— CNS photo/Dean Lewins, AAP via Reuters

such as Corryong and Walwa in Victoria's Alpine country.

Catholics such as the Burtons and Darlows say their faith is strong.

"We have a very deep faith," said Burton. "I put a scapular on the door and sprinkled the house with holy water, and we have statues in our home, including the Infant of Prague, and so I prayed — we prayed very hard, and asked other people to pray.

"All of these people are

amazing people, with an amazing Catholic faith, and we know God will protect them," she said. "Every time we hear good news, we're overjoyed that these people haven't lost their homes. There is just miracle after miracle happening."

In his statement, Bishop Mackinlay applauded the heroism of firefighters — mainly volunteers — risking their lives for their country and community.

In Jingellic, a young volun-

teer firefighter, Sam McPaul, died Dec. 30 after a freak tornado caused by the fires flipped his 11-ton truck. His wife Megan, whom he married in May, is expecting their first child.

Similar stories can be heard across the country. In Sydney, the Mass for Sydney firefighter Andrew O'Dwyer was due to be held in the Horsley Park parish Jan. 7.

O'Dwyer, 36, and fellow firefighter Geoffrey Keaton, 32, were killed Dec. 19 when a fallen tree caused their tanker to roll as they fought fires south of Sydney.

The Order of Malta Australia announced Jan. 3 it would use money from its Natural Disaster Fund to provide emergency relief to those directly impacted.

"We are exploring opportunities with our regional Hospitallers to provide some direct assistance, with our top priority currently to provide support to the thousands who have lost homes or are stranded," said a statement from the order.

Prayer for the Opening of Session, Missouri House of Representatives

By Monsignor Robert A. Kurwicky, House Chaplain
Jan. 8, 2019

"God is able to provide you in abundance for every good work."
— II Corinthians 9:8.

Almighty God, our Creator, Whom we seek to serve and to Whom we look for guidance, we bow before the altar of prayer at noon, offering to You the gratitude and the loyalty of our hearts.

We thank You for this new day, fresh from Your hand, with its possibilities for great and good living.

By Your spirit, may we always be honest, kind and forgiving.

May we be mild in our criticism of others, patient with

those who criticize us and considerate with those who differ from us.

As we follow the example of the Scriptures that instructed us about doing good for others, may we during this new Session consistently reflect on the power of the Word of God.

Through these historic times, bless our Governor,

the Speaker, Members of this House, their families and all who work with them.

May the blessing of Your powerful presence rest upon us this day and every day.

Together lead us in the paths of unity and peace for Your name's sake, here in the People's House.

And the House says, "Amen!"

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Governor gives permission for refugee resettlement to continue

By Jay Nies

Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS) of Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri (CCCNMO), along with the other agencies that resettle refugees in this state, have been given the needed permission to continue doing so.

Governor Mike Parson on Dec. 30 signed a consent order for resettling refugees in the state, effective indefinitely unless or until withdrawn.

"I hereby consent to the resettlement of lawfully admitted refugees within the State of Missouri in the communities that request them, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations," the governor wrote to U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo Dec. 30.

Refugees are people seeking refuge in the United States, having been forcibly displaced from their homes due to political instability, violence and persecution. Economic hardship is not taken into account when determining U.S. refugee status.

Executive Order 13888, signed by President Donald Trump in September 2019, gives state and local governments a say in whether refugees may be resettled within their geographical boundaries.

Gov. Parson noted that nearly 18,000 refugees from 45 countries have resettled in Missouri since 2002.

He pointed to St. Louis having one of the largest Bosnian populations outside that country itself, in light of refugees having settled there during a long and deadly civil war in the nations of the former Yugoslavia.

Four agencies resettle refugees in Missouri in five main areas. These agencies consist of CCCNMO in Columbia, Jewish Vocational Services and

Della Lamb in Kansas City and International Institute in St. Louis and Springfield.

Most refugees in Missouri are resettled in and near these cities.

"State organizations and faith-based groups work tirelessly to support refugee resettlement," the governor wrote. "... These groups do an excellent job of transitioning newly settled populations, ensuring they are educated, trained and prepared to assimilate into their new community."

He pointed out that Missouri has a long and rich history of immigration, "dating back to America's earliest explorers, fur traders and missionaries."

"Today, Missouri's population includes thousands of former refugees who have become vital members of our communities," he stated, adding that they have helped strengthen local economies, especially through entrepreneurship.

"Community volunteers, especially faith-based partners, continue to be an integral part of such local resettlement efforts," he wrote.

He said Missourians will continue to work hard to ensure that refugees become a thriving part of the state's communities.

"I am confident this demonstration of compassion will mark the first step in these (refugees) becoming patriotic and productive fellow Americans," he stated.

"Excellent news"

Also on Dec. 30, the Boone County Commission gave permission for refugees to be resettled in the Columbia vicinity.

"This is excellent news," said CCCNMO Executive Director Daniel Lester. "This allows us to continue this important

work of mercy and charity in partnership with faith groups throughout the area."

CCCNMO receives referrals for refugee resettlement from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) in Washington, D.C., which contracts with the U.S. State Department to resettle approved U.S. refugee cases.

Many refugees arrive here with little or no money or command of American culture and the English language.

Catholic Charities' RIS has been resettling refugees in the Jefferson City Diocese since 1975 during the Vietnam War.

The RIS staff includes former refugees who themselves have been resettled.

With donations and assistance from other local congregations and community individuals, RIS ensures that arriving refugees have furnished housing, food, and intensive case management throughout their beginning months of resettlement.

This includes school enrollments, English classes, driver's training, job assistance, health checkups and many other services needed to become self-sufficient and integrated into their new society.

RIS resettled 92 refugees in 2019 and anticipates resettling between 75 and 90 this year.

Regardless of the refugees' nation of origin, they are subject to thorough security checks through the U.S. State Department before being cleared for resettlement.

The State Department and USCCB take many things into account when deciding which partner agency to assign an approved refugee case. Among these factors are access to resources, the presence of other people from the same

area as the refugee, and the total number of refugees the U.S. government allows to enter the country in a given year.

The projected total of

that if our local officials — say, the Boone County Commission — had issued their consent letter and Gov. Parson had not, that would make the local consent null and void," said Mr. Lester.

In the meantime, RIS has all of the resources it needs to remain busy resettling refugees and getting them the ongoing help they need to become happy, productive members of society.

Mr. Lester hopes that as more states and local jurisdictions submit consent letters to the State Department, federal policymakers and the President will recognize strong, bipartisan support for

refugee resettlement in this country.

"So that means maybe the ceiling need not be as low as the federal government has it currently set at," Mr. Lester said. "This sends a great message that we see state government from both parties are willing to continue to do this — they see the value that refugees continue to bring to their state and their communities."

The Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC), public-policy agency of the state's four Roman Catholic dioceses, applauded the governor's decision.

"The U.S. refugee resettlement program plays a vital role in helping foreign nationals who hold a well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries to find refuge and start a new life with their families," the MCC stated. "In many cases, these refugees face persecution due to their religious beliefs or their political views."

The MCC noted that as new U.S. residents, resettled refugees bring fresh perspectives

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Refugee & Immigration Services

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See RESETTLEMENT, page 8

In Lake Ozark: Serving compassion, one meal at a time

By Eddie O'Neill

When it came to a regular meal ministry at Our Lady of the Lake parish in Lake Ozark, the parishioners had the funeral part covered.

A group of ladies were on call to serve a meal after a funeral and burial at the parish.

What was missing were meals for families of people who were headed into the hospital or who just had a birth or lost a loved one.

That all changed in the summer of 2017, thanks to a parish ministry called Compassion Meals, newly formed to fill that gap at Our Lady of the Lake.

"It came out of a social concerns committee meeting," said organizer Melodi Graessle who

along with her husband, Luke, has been a parishioner since 2015. "We wanted to cover a need that went beyond the standard funeral luncheon."

The group consists of more than 35 women of the parish who are ready to cook as needed.

Mrs. Graessle coordinates the specifics.

"I will call the family and tell them what I know," she explained. "I will ask them what they'd like, how many people we are cooking for and check if there any food allergies or special needs. Then, we set up a time to drop off the meal with the family."

Mrs. Graessle then sends out an email to the group with the menu via a program called



Sign-up Genius. It allows volunteers to sign-up on a first-come, first-serve basis.

"The nice part of this ministry is that we have so many ladies on our roster that if you

Lusica Hankins, Ann Wallace, Melodi Graessle and Peggy Henderson of Our Lady of the Lake parish in Lake Ozark prepare Christmas cookie trays to deliver to parishioners who are homebound or are residents of local nursing homes.

can't help this week, you can help next time," Mrs. Graessle noted. "It is not just a small group of us doing all the work. We have a lot of helping hands."

Whether it's lasagna with a salad and breadsticks or meatloaf with a side of greens, the meals are cooked at each volunteer's home before being dropped off at the parish and ultimately at the family's home.

The ministry served five meals in 2017.

That grew to 15 in 2018 and 17 in 2019.

In addition, according to Mrs. Graessle, they have added four times a year where they serve parishioners who are homebound or are residents of local nursing homes.

"In February, we do a soup meal," she explained. "In June, we do muffins and bread. Pasta is our October dish and in December, we do cookie trays. We served 18 people (who are homebound) at 15 places this past Christmas."

She added that the people who receive these meals are very touched.

"I think they appreciate the visit as much as the meal," Mrs. Graessle observed. "I try to spend 15 to 30 minutes at each place. They want to catch up on what is going on at church and with the other parishioners."

That being the case, the ministry has proven to be very rewarding for everyone involved.

"The reaction is very positive," she said. "We get the sweetest thank-you notes. Everyone is so appreciative."

Young adults gather at St. Brendan in Mexico for Advent day of recollection, Solemn High Mass

By Jay Nies

About 40 people from across Missouri attended the Resplenduit Advent day of recollection for young adults Dec. 21 at St. Brendan parish in Mexico.

Aimed at Catholics ages 18 to 35, it included talks by canons of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, along with time for silent meditation, confessions, the Rosary, fellowship, and Solemn High Mass in Latin in the Extraordinary Form.

Young adults from across the diocese participated in the Mass, which was offered in celebration of the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle.

"Resplenduit" is Latin for "It has shone brightly."

Marianne Cline, a member of St. Francis Xavier parish in Taos, had attended a day of recollection given by Christ the King canons at St. Brendan for Lent and enjoyed it enough to return.

"The spiritual reflections were really good," she said. "I learned some things and got a new angle on things I already knew."

One of the talks at the Advent retreat was about the



About 40 young adults, ages 18 to 35, take time out for an Advent day of recollection given by curates of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, Dec. 21 at St. Brendan parish in Mexico.

— Photo by Father Dylan Schrader

Christmas liturgical season, including feastdays leading up to the Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord on Jan. 6 and looking ahead to the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord (also known as Candlemas) on Feb. 2.

"It was really informative and helped me go deep into the feastdays that happen during the octave of Christmas, how they're all connected and why they're important — especially St. Stephen, St. John and the Holy Innocents," said Ms. Cline.

She noted that in secular terms, people think of Christmas being over after Dec. 25.

"But as Catholics, we keep

on celebrating for quite a while," she said.

Ms. Cline doesn't regularly attend Mass in Latin in the Extraordinary Form — which was celebrated throughout the Church in the centuries leading up to the Second Vatican Council.

"But I feel like when I go every once in a while, it enriches my experience of the Masses I normally attend in English," she said.

She believes both forms of the Mass — which are equally licit in the eyes of the Church — are more similar than they seem.

It boils down to emphasizing different things.

"I think they are complimentary and that both kind of enrich each other," she said. "I always learn something new about going to the Mass that I go to regularly."

The same goes for different emphases in the liturgical calendar.

"Even though we kind of do things differently like in a regular parish, there's still a lot of richness of seeing how the earlier liturgical calendar was lived for so many years and how some people are still using it today," said Ms. Cline.

Father Dylan Schrader, pastor of St. Brendan parish, who is Bishop W. Shawn McKnight's episcopal delegate for Mass in the extraordinary form in the Jefferson City diocese said St. Brendan parish is always happy to welcome young Catholics.

"It is amazing how many young people are interested in our Catholic traditions, including Latin and older forms of worship," he said. "I am happy that St. Brendan can partner with the Institute of Christ the King to provide these opportunities."

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QUESTION CORNER

Poverty and priests /
Penitential rite at Mass

By Father Kenneth Doyle

Catholic News Service



Q. We had a discussion the other day about some of the difficulties facing priests, and this question came up: Do all priests take a vow of poverty? (Suffolk, Virginia)

A. Priests who are members of religious orders — Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, etc. — take a vow of poverty and own nothing; the houses they live in, the cars they drive, even the clothing they wear belong not to themselves but to the religious order.

Diocesan (sometimes called “secular”) priests do not take this vow. Diocesan priests are ordained for a specific geographic region and usually work in parishes. Diocesan priests are given a salary (usually including room and board) and are expected to pay their own expenses — car, clothing, charitable gifts, etc.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops notes on its website that “it is also expected that diocesan priests will lead a life of simplicity consonant with the people they serve.”

Perhaps some numbers serve best to illustrate: I am a diocesan priest, now retired after 50 years of active ministry. My retirement income from the diocese is currently \$1,900 per month, and my monthly Social Security amounts to about \$1,200.

From this, I am expected to pay rental for an apartment, food expenses, taxes, automobile expenses and travel, as well as any donations to charity. (Often retired priests, if they are healthy, supplement their income by helping out with services at local parishes, for which they receive a modest stipend.)

The Church’s *Code of Canon Law* states clearly that “clerics are to foster simplicity of life and are to refrain from all things that have a semblance of vanity” (282.1).

I mentioned some years ago in this column that one of my heroes was Bishop Kenneth E. Untener of Saginaw, Michigan, who passed away in 2004. He kept all of his possessions in his small car and moved continually around his diocese, staying for a month at a time in each one of his diocese’s parishes. To me, Bishop Untener was a great example of someone who modeled his life on Jesus Christ, Who “had nowhere to rest His head.”

Q. Every Mass I attend begins with a penitential rite, which I take to be the forgiveness of sins for those who are there worshipping. And then, just before Holy Communion, we say, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.” Why, then, does the Church require Catholics to go to confession? (Russellville, Arkansas)

A. It is true, as you indicate, that several times throughout the Mass we indicate our unworthiness to participate in such a sacred act. However, none of these expressions of sinfulness and sorrow is equivalent to sacramental absolution, and they do not dispense us from the obligation of confessing grave sins before receiving Holy Communion.

The Church’s *Code of Canon Law* states clearly that “a member of the Christian faithful is obliged to confess in kind and number all grave sins committed after baptism and not yet remitted directly through the keys of the Church nor acknowledged in individual confession” (988.1).

Grave, or “mortal,” sins are those involving serious matter, committed with knowledge of their gravity and the deliberate

See DOYLE, page 18

Papal Audience

January 8, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

In our continuing catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles, we see the Gospel preached not only on land but also at sea, as Paul, now a prisoner, is taken by ship to Rome. From Crete, Paul warns the crew of the risk of further travel, yet they carry on into a near fatal storm. Paul encourages all on board not to be afraid, and recounts how an angel has told him that they will arrive in Rome. In this way, Jesus’ promise that His disciples would become His witnesses “to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8) would be fulfilled. Landing on Malta, the travellers experience “unusual kindness” from the people of that place, but hazards too, as Paul is bitten by a viper. He himself is unharmed, and during his stay on the island he heals many of the sick. Paul’s sea voyage, full of peril and salvation, can serve as a symbol of God’s providential care for us through our passage from death to life in the waters of baptism. May the Lord sustain us in our own trials and open our hearts to those who today experience shipwreck and arrive on our shores. May they find in us that fraternal love born of our saving encounter with Jesus Christ.

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s audience, especially the groups from Australia and the United States of America. May each of you, and your families, cherish the joy of this Christmas season and draw near in prayer to the Savior Who has come to dwell among us. May God bless you!



RESETTLEMENT

From page 6

and help revitalize local economies and communities.

Furthermore, “as Catholics, we are called to welcome the stranger, and we work through our charitable agencies to help refugees find a new place to call home,” the MCC stated. “We thank Governor Parson for agreeing to continue the proud tradition of refugee resettlement in Missouri.”

National Migration Week

These developments happened to take place right before Catholics in the United States observe National Migration Week, Jan. 15-11.

The theme for this year’s observance is “Promoting a Church and a World for All,” and reflects the Church as a welcoming place for all God’s children.

“National Migration Week is an opportunity for the Church to unite prayerfully and live out the Holy Father’s vision to welcome immigrants and refugees into our communities and to provide opportunities that will help them and all people of good will to thrive,” stated Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington and chairman of the U.S. Catholic bishops’ Committee on Migration.

He noted that there are cur-

rently more than 70 million refugees worldwide.

Pope Francis has challenged people to move from a culture of “indifference” to a culture of solidarity, which will help them to embrace the poor and marginalized, along with those struggling to find a better life.

“As a founding principle of our country, we have always

welcomed immigrant and refugee populations, and through the social services and good works of the Church, we have accompanied our brothers and sisters in integrating to daily American life,” Bishop Dorsonville stated.

ccnmo.org/programs/refugee-and-immigration-services/

Canton “Goodie baskets”



Sister Jane Weisgram SSND (center), parish life coordinator for St. Joseph parish in Canton and Queen of Peace parish in Ewing, and members and friends of the parish’s St. Ann’s Sodality assemble Christmas Goodie Baskets on Dec. 14 for parishioners who are homebound or are residents of local nursing homes. They made and delivered 13 baskets this year.

— Photo by Jim Ellison

A child's hope for 2020

By Hosffman Ospino
Catholic News Service



Sitting at the dinner table with my children, 6 and 8, we talk about school, games, friends and books. Recently, the conversation focused on the new year.

My daughter asked, "What does it mean to start a new year?"

My son quickly replied that a new year is an opportunity to hope and dream, a chance to be better.

I bet he heard that from one of his teachers at the Catholic school they attend.

"What's hope?" my daughter asked.

As a theologian, I felt that this was my opportunity to teach my children a lesson, perhaps drawing from what I teach my graduate students and some of the great minds who have written about the topic.

My son beat me again. "Well ... hope is when you know that the world can be better for you and others."

Even when things are bad, it doesn't have to be that way. I want to live more

than 100 years to make the world better," he said.

Perfect! He captured the essence of Christian hope in simple, yet profound words.

After listening, my daughter responded, "Me too! I want to live more than 100 years to make the world better."

In the simple words of a child, I hear loud echoes of three core Christian convictions that are worth remembering as we start a new year.

One, there is always room for a bright tomorrow. This is what God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Death does not have the last word; evil will be unmasked; despair is the lot of those unable to acknowledge that truth and justice in the end will shine.

Two, sin is not the status quo of human existence.

We were not created to live in a world of lies, or crass materialism, or subsumed in ideologies that make us less human.

When confronting the suffering of our neighbor, especially those most vulnerable, we must not remain unmoved.

Three, we all have a shared respon-

sibility to make the world a good place for us and for others.

Knowing ourselves part of a larger whole is the antidote to greedy individualism that ignores the cries of others and the cries of the created order being pillaged for immediate gain while risking the future of the next generations.

After the conversation with my children, I browse the news.

The United States of America begins the year 2020 in pain: a sadly divided society that seems to have lost its sense of the common good; an impeached president; institutions losing credibility; callous leaders legislating, almost with impunity and under the guise of democracy, against the good of groups and communities they are supposed to serve; children in prisons that make a few rich; the poor losing the few social benefits that make their lives bearable; new revelations of sexual abuse of children by clergy and the mismanagement associated with

them, etc.

I stop. What I hear at the dinner table does not match what I read in the news.

Are these alternative universes?

Perhaps this is what Christian hope is all about. An alternative. God's alternative. Not only a possibility, but also a calling.

We need to allow ourselves as Catholics and as citizens of this nation the chance to dream with hope.

Yes, dream ... again ... and again. We cannot stop dreaming. We must dream informed by the truth and beauty of the Gospel.

We may need to follow our children's lead.

Because hope is contagious, I want to dream with my children and say, "Me too! I want to live more than 100 years to make the world better."

Happy 2020.

Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.

Cherishing Christ's words

By Father Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service



As we enter 2020, the music of Antonio Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" reminds us of the repetition of life's seasons.

In addition to our world of seasons, the Church's liturgical year continues to recycle Christ's blessed words that He left us.

Repetition contains a sameness that can sometimes lead us to being matter of fact.

This can also hold true of Christ's words.

After hearing them year in and year out, it's easy to feel, "I've heard them before, so what?"

To ask what exactly has changed our life because of Christ's words is one good means for responding to the "so what" feeling that comes with repetition.

What particularly has made a dramatic impact in our life because of them?

Was there additional strength or comfort because of them?

What words of Christ do we cling to repeatedly in coping with life's challenges?

In his book, *The Idea of a University*,

St. John Newman defines an idea as an illumination, giving us the picture of awesome light flooding our mind that allows us to see more clearly.

What in Christ's words may have caused us to say, "Now I understand better, I see new patterns and connections in my life like never before thanks to them,"?

When St. John Paul II began his pontificate, he often quoted Christ's words, "Be not afraid."

No doubt these simple words have carried many of us through difficult situations.

Where does the strength of these words come from?

Could it be that we have faced such situations alone, but we found a trusted friend at our side who wishes the best for us?

I, like so many, have experienced relief and comfort in confession when hearing the words, "Your sins are forgiven."

Those words are like breathing fresh air after being suffocated by a sense of guilt and shame.

When a speaker delivers an inspiring talk often it can be heard, "I hung onto his or her every word."

As we look back on 2019, what words of Christ most stay with us?

Why are they so precious that we dare not say, "So what?"

REFLECTION

The long way home

By Mark Saucier

In our church, the Magi begin their journey at the far left side of the sanctuary. Over the 12 days of Christmas, they make their way across the apse, arriving at the Nativity scene just in time for the feast of the Epiphany.

I like the custom, but I would amend it. When all the other Christmas scenery disappears, I would let the Magi linger a little longer. Slowly retracing their steps, they may remind us of something important about the Christmas story.

In cultures where the Magi play an important role, especially where they, and not St. Nick, are responsible for children's gifts, they have some backstory. An Armenian text gave them the names of Gaspar (or Caspar), Balthazar and Melchior.

They were all kings, though of ages representing three generations. Melchior, the oldest, was King of Arabia. Balthazar was African and the King of Ethiopia or Saba. Gaspar, the youngest, was King of Tarsus in Turkey.

Legend also provides these kings with a history after their visit. Deeply affected by their encounter, they went home, renounced their royal roles and deep-pocketed robes, and took to the road as humble beggars and preachers.

The extended story of the Three Kings follows the pattern of the hero's journey. Joseph Campbell, a scholar of comparative mythology, wrote about the archetypal hero's journey that varies only slightly from culture to culture. We find it in the stories of Gilgamesh, Buddha, and many of the prophets.

The hero's journey begins with a summons that comes from a voice or a sign. Then there is the trek, filled with trials and tribulations to test and temper the hero. When he or she finally reaches the destination of their quest, they receive a gift that leads to personal transformation.

The fourth stage is the most significant. This is the return. The hero must leave the mountaintop, the enchanted forest, or the crib of the Christ child, and go back to use the gift to serve others.

It is only in the return, and the service, that the gift is fully realized and the hero completely renewed.

Our own Christmas may pale in comparison to the Magi's, but we too were called to the quest with the first candle of Advent. Now it's over and the time of return.

So what about that gift?

We might take the time to reflect on, not what I got *for* Christmas, but what, if anything, I got *from* Christmas.

Departing Dominican priest grateful for his time in Columbia

By Jay Nies

Dominican Father Joachim Culotta's personal motto is "Trust in the Lord."

It's a message he's been preaching consistently for over 60 years.

"I want people to be able to trust in God's mercy," said Fr. Culotta, who has spent six of the past 14 years in Columbia.

"God's mercy is inexhaustible," he said. "A lot of people can't fathom that. They think, 'My sins are so grave that God will never forgive me.'

"They're wrong," he insisted. "I'm convinced that if Judas Iscariot had repented like St. Peter, God would have forgiven him immediately."

Fr. Culotta hopes people will remember that message long after he takes up his next assignment at St. Pius Dominican Priory in Chicago on Jan. 13.

He is one of the three remaining priests of the Dominican Community of St. Raymond of Penafort in Columbia who will receive new assignments outside the Jefferson City diocese this year.

The others — Dominican Father Richard Litzau, pastor of St. Thomas More Newman Center parish, and Father Michail Ford, associate pastor — will be reassigned July 1.

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight will appoint diocesan priests to serve in their place when the time comes.

The leadership of the Dominican Province of St. Albert the Great announced in November that the priests would be moved to larger communities, in order for them to "engage in a more robust

common life while attending to the demands of their ministries."

Fr. Culotta said he's sad to leave central Missouri but knows it's time for him to cut back on his active ministry.

"I'm 82," he stated. "I actually came back here to retire, but there was so much to do that I love doing, so I never really stopped."

He was one of the first two Dominican priests to arrive in Columbia in 2006, serving as associate pastor of St. Thomas More Newman Center parish and as superior of the newly formed St. Raymond of Penafort Dominican community.

He was reassigned to Albuquerque, New Mexico, a few years later — followed by St. Louis, then Lafayette, Indiana — but returned to Columbia in 2016.

"I wanted to come back here," he said. "I really like Columbia and the Newman Center, and the priests of this diocese are really great.

"I like Bishop (Emeritus John R.) Gaydos, who was in office when I came back, and Bishop McKnight, too. I think he's a very good bishop," he stated.

Fr. Culotta said he'll miss the people who have been at the epicenter of his Priesthood throughout his time in Columbia.

"This has been one of the best ministries I've ever had in my 60-plus years of ministry," he said.

"The people at the Newman Center are friendly, and they're interested in ministry themselves," he said. "They

want to go out to the community and help as much as they can.

"That's what our Christian life is all about," he asserted. "And I see that very strongly here at the Newman Center — In fact, I see that attitude in the people of all three parishes in Columbia."

Tapped out

Fr. Culotta was born and raised in Beaumont, Texas, a predominantly Catholic city not far from Louisiana.

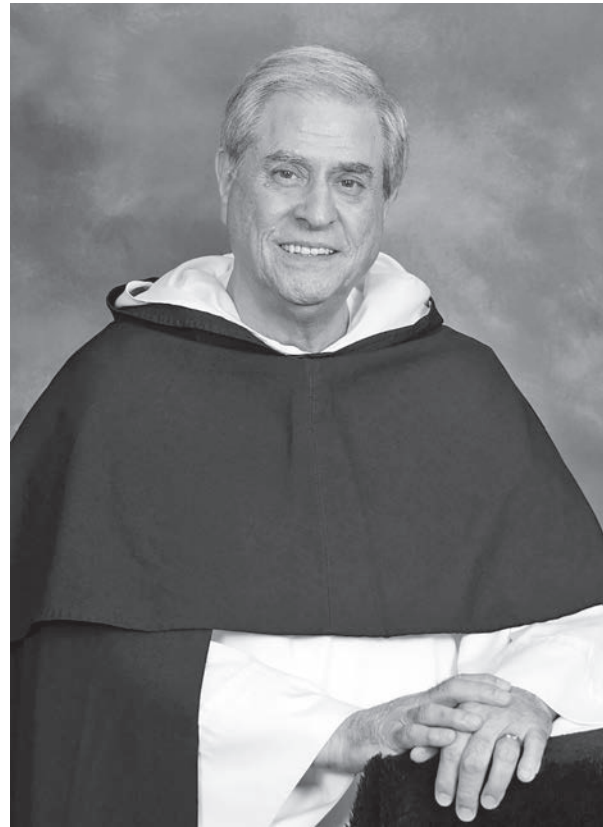
He loved tap-dancing and wanted to become a dancer. But he inexplicably lost interest during his senior year in what had been his life's passion.

He rediscovered his enthusiasm for dancing only after discerning his calling to religious life and Priesthood.

"I love to dance but my body won't let me anymore," he said. "I still know all the steps. Whenever I watch TV and see dancing, my feet are moving. But I'm sitting down, of course."

He holds a master's degree in Counseling Psychology, and a doctorate in Canon Law from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome.

That qualified him to serve as a judge on the diocesan Matrimonial Tribunal during his first time in the diocese and to offer assistance upon



Dominican Father Joachim Culotta

his return.

"Dominicans are known as the Order of Preachers," he noted in a 2006 interview, "but preaching takes on so many forms: homilies, teaching, counseling, even work in the Tribunal."

Love and truth

Headquartered in Chicago, the Province of St. Albert the Great is one of four Dominican provinces in the United States.

They are part of a worldwide order established by St. Dominic in 1216 to promote preaching the truth in order to combat destructive heresy.

Unlike diocesan priests, whose first commitment is to God through their parishioners and their bishop, the Dominican priests' first commitment is to God through their order.

Living in communities much like families, Dominicans take an emphatic vow of obedience. From that vow and the rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of the Dominican Order, flow the associated vows of poverty and chastity.

Dominicans turn the internal charisms of prayer and contemplation outward toward preaching, teaching and apostolic service.

Fr. Culotta believes that second only to the Eucharist, good preaching is the most important thing priests can give to Catholics.

"They come to church to worship God and grow in their spiritual lives," he noted, "and I think our preaching helps them have a better relationship with God."

Brother priests

Fr. Culotta believes having a Dominican presence has been good for the diocese.

"I think we build on the good ministry that the diocesan priests are doing," he said.

He has great respect for all of his fellow priests who serve here.

"They're good priests," he said. "I've really enjoyed them. They're a big part of why I chose to come back and be in this diocese again. Many of them are very spiritual, and I wanted to be a part of that."

Likewise, he's derived great satisfaction from living in community with the other Dominicans who have served in Columbia.

"The brothers I've been here with — we call each other 'brother' in the Dominican order — they've just been great about helping, about encouraging us all to be the best kind of people we can be," he stated.

"That's why I chose to be a part of a religious community in the first place," he said.

Fr. Culotta asks for prayers for God to help him continue to minister the best way he can, "even though I will be somewhat retired."

He said he's enjoyed every moment of his time in Columbia.

"I will remember the Columbia community, especially the people of Newman, for their acceptance, for all they have done to help me grow as a priest," he said.

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SSM Health, MU Health Care agree to end exclusive negotiations

SSM Health to expand its search for a partner in Jefferson City and Mexico

By Jay Nies

Bishop Shawn W. McKnight said recent developments in the possible sale of the SSM St. Mary Hospitals in Jefferson City and Mexico offer “an opportunity for the community to become re-engaged in the important decision of how health care should be provided in Central Missouri.”

St. Louis-based SSM Health and Columbia-based MU Health Care announced Dec. 20 that after more than a year of diligent, exclusive negotiations, they have mutually agreed to allow their Letter of Intent (LOI) to transfer ownership of SSM Health’s ministries in Jefferson City and Mexico, to expire, effective Jan. 7.

Discussions with MU Health Care will continue as SSM Health broadens the scope of its search for a partner that will help maintain the availability of high-quality care in these communities.

The Catholic, not-for-profit’s presence in mid-Missouri includes SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital—Jefferson City and SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital—Audrain, as well as outpatient and medical group locations throughout the region.

“Although we expect to be having conversations with other organizations who we believe can benefit these communities, we continue to view MU Health Care as a valuable potential partner,” said Laura S. Kaiser, FACHE, president and CEO of SSM Health.

“We remain committed to exploring opportunities to work together to improve access to high-quality affordable health care services for the people we serve,” she said.

Bishop McKnight said he wants the communities affected by this decision to know the diocese “stands with them in writing the next chapter of Catholic health care for our communities.”

“We are better when we work together,” he stated.

He insisted that people from the affected communities need to be involved in the ongoing discernment process, and that all parties involved, most espe-

cially SSM Health, must hold themselves accountable to the community.

“If the Catholic Church has learned anything in the past 30 years, it is the necessity of transparency and accountability,” he stated.

No set timeline

MU Health Care CEO Jonathan Curtright is convinced that valuable relationships with SSM Health have been built around shared objectives during the past months of negotiation.

“We continue to value the voices of community support for our shared goal to create an outstanding and sustainable health care model that provides quality care and support to patients, employees, physicians and communities across Missouri,” said Mr. Curtright.

“While we are disappointed that our exclusive negotiations with SSM Health are ending, we value the relationships we have built and look forward to continued discussions,” he said.

A statement from SSM Health pointed out that as a mission- and values-driven ministry, it is “committed to ensuring exceptional, accessible and affordable care to all those they serve.”

No timeline has been established for identifying a potential partner or reaching an agreement.

Ms. Kaiser said SSM Health remains focused on finding the right long-term solution while ensuring that there is no disruption in the care patients need and expect from the organization.

“We have deep roots in the region and a sacred calling to ensure that the people of mid-Missouri have access to high-quality, compassionate care for generations to come,” Ms. Kaiser said.

“We move forward thoughtfully and deliberately, with the future of our employees, physicians and the community in mind.”

Need for transparency

Bishop McKnight, who is not a party to the negotiations, has been in regular contact with SSM Health and MU Health officials since their formal negotiations began in August 2018.

He pointed out in a Dec. 20 statement that caring for people who are sick — including their spiritual care — is “a core element of our Catholic mission.”

“As the Church, we will continue to provide ministry here in our diocese to the sick, elderly and the poor,” with or without the benefit of Catholic hospitals, he stated.

He said he is also collabo-

rating with health care professionals and civic officials to ensure that Catholics and others working in health care may continue to provide healing and care in these communities according to the values of their shared Christian faith.

He pointed to the impressive legacy of the religious congregation now known as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary,

whose members founded St. Mary’s in Jefferson City in 1905.

“This time of transition offers us the opportunity to thank God for all the good that has been accomplished by the founding sisters and their collaborators over the years, and to ask for His guidance in continuing this work into the future,” the bishop said.

USCCB president urges world leaders to pursue dialogue, seek peace

Catholic News Service

Washington, D.C.

Hours after Iran launched more than a dozen ballistic missiles at two Iraqi bases, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued a statement calling for urgent prayers “that our world’s leaders will pursue dialogue and seek peace.”

“In the face of the escalating tensions with Iran,” he said, people should join him in “asking our Blessed Mother Mary, the Queen of Peace, to intercede, that Jesus Christ might strengthen the peacemakers, comfort the suffering, and protect the innocent and all those in harm’s way, especially the men and women in our military and diplomatic service.”

Iran’s missile launch — Jan. 8 in Iraq, late Jan. 7 in the U.S. — was said to be in retaliation for Washington’s targeted killing of Iran’s top militia commander, Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, in Baghdad Jan. 3.

The missiles hit the al-Asad airbase, which houses U.S. troops, and American and coalition forces in the northern Iraqi town of Irbil, in areas not heavily populated.

During his general audience Jan. 8, Pope Francis also addressed the current situation in Iraq, offering “a warm welcome to the Arab-speaking pilgrims, especially those from Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and the Middle East.”

“In the saddest moments of our lives, in the most distressing moments and of trial, we must not be afraid and be bold as Paul was, because God watches over us. He is always

close to us. May the Lord bless you all and always protect you from the evil one,” he said.

President Donald Trump who was scheduled to address the nation Jan. 8 about the current crisis, tweeted Jan. 7 after the missile attacks: “All is well!

Missiles launched from Iran at two military bases located in Iraq. Assessment of casualties & damages taking place now. So far, so good! We have the most powerful and well equipped military anywhere in the world, by far!”

Pope prays for dialogue amid U.S.-Iran tensions

By Junno Arocho Esteves

Catholic News Service

Vatican City

Pope Francis led pilgrims in prayers for peace as tensions between the United States and Iran escalated following the assassination of a top Iranian general.

Several days after Ayatollah Ali Hosseini Khamenei, Iran’s supreme leader, warned of “harsh retaliation” for the Jan. 3 U.S. drone attack that killed Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the Pope said that “a terrible air of tension is felt in many parts of the world.”

“War only brings death and destruction. I call on all parties to keep alive the flame of dialogue and self-control and avoid the shadow of enmity,” the Pope said after praying the Angelus prayer with pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square Jan. 5.

He then led the pilgrims in a moment of silent prayer so “that the Lord may give us the grace” of peace.

The drone strike, which killed Soleimani and six other people, including an Iraqi militia commander, caused a sharp escalation in already tense relations after President Donald Trump pulled out of a nuclear deal with Iran last year.

In an interview with CNN, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo defended President Trump’s decision and said that Soleimani “was actively plotting in the region to take actions, the big action as he described it, that would have put dozens if not hundreds of American lives at risk. We know it was imminent.”

Shortly after the Iranian general’s death, the United States deployed an additional 3,000 troops to the Middle East to stave off any retaliatory attacks against forces in the region.

However, the attack was seen by world leaders as an unnecessary provocation that could further destabilize the Middle East.

Speaking to Vatican News Jan. 3, Archbishop Leo Boccardi, apostolic nuncio to Iran, said the assassination “creates apprehension and shows us how difficult it is to build and believe in peace.”

“The appeal is to lower tension, to call everyone to negotiation and to believe in dialogue knowing that, has history has always shown us, that war and weapons aren’t the solution to the problems afflicting the world today,” Archbishop Boccardi said.

Puerto Rico reels under successive earthquakes

Catholic News Service

Washington, D.C.

At least one person has died

and one Catholic Church was destroyed by the latest of a series of earthquakes to rock

Puerto Rico.

A magnitude 6.4 quake shook people awake at 4:24

a.m. local time Jan. 7, less than 24 hours after a magnitude 5.8 temblor shook the island in the

predawn hours of Jan. 6.

Aftershocks ranging in magnitude from 3.8 to 6 were felt throughout the island following the early morning temblor, reported the U.S. Geological Survey.

The latest earthquake sent people scurrying from their homes into the streets from Ponce, the island's second-largest city, westward along the island's southern coast to the towns of Guayanilla, Guanica, Yauco and Lajas, all near the epicenter of the quakes.



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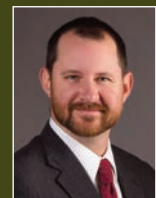
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Pope: 'A victory for women is a victory for humanity'

Catholic News Service

Vatican City

The world will not know

peace unless there is an end to violence against women, the exploitation of their bodies

and the denial of their dignity, Pope Francis said on the feast of Mary, Mother of God.

God sent His Son into the world as a human baby, born of a woman so that He would

have the same human flesh of all those He came to save, the Pope noted.

Celebrating Mass Jan. 1 for the feast day and the World Day of Peace, the Pope said: "If we want a better world that is a house of peace and not a courtyard of war, we must take to heart the dignity of every woman."

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, was born of a woman, he said.

"The woman is a giver and mediator of peace and must be fully involved in decision-making processes because when women can share their gifts, the world will find itself more united and more at peace."

"A victory for women is a victory for all of humanity," the Pope said.

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2020 publication schedule

Here is a list of the print issue dates for *The Catholic Missourian* for 2020: Jan. 10 and 24; Feb. 7 and 21; March 6 and 20; April 3 and 17; May 1, 15 and 29; June 12 and 26; July 10 and 24; Aug. 7 and 21; Sept. 4 and 18; Oct. 2, 16 and 30; Nov. 13 and 27; and Dec. 11 and 18.

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Rorate Mass by candlelight before dawn on shortest day of year

By Jay Nies

The light was coming into the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Father Jeremy Secrist, pastor of St. Peter parish in Jefferson City, offered a Rorate Mass by candlelight before dawn on Dec. 21.

The Rorate Mass is an ancient Catholic tradition for the longest night of the year.

Father Brad Berhorst led the chanting of “O Come, O Come Emanuel” and other hymns without accompaniment in the acoustically resonant church.

The muted light of candles in darkness represents the longing of the people who have received the light of Christ in His Incarnation and who now await His glorious Second Coming.

“This Rorate Mass is a microcosm of our Advent preparation, what this Season of Advent is really meant to be,” Fr. Secrist stated in his homily. “We come to realize in this shade, in this shadow that obscures us from seeing the Lord fully, our tremendous need for a Savior, so we can be all the more attentive to when He DOES come, when He DOES make His presence known to us, when He DOES reveal to us the fullness of His life and light.

“May the Blessed Mother lead us closer to Jesus, Our Lord,” said Fr. Secrist, “so that when He comes in all of His glory and power, we may be a people who have longed for His coming, who have prepared well for His coming and who desire to see Him face-to-face.”



Father Jeremy Secrist elevates the Most Blessed Sacrament while celebrating a Rorate Mass by candlelight before dawn on Saturday, Dec. 21, in St. Peter Church in Jefferson City. More photos from this event have been posted in *The Catholic Missourian's* online edition, www.cathmo.com. Select “Photo Galleries” from the “Multimedia” tab on the menu bar. — Photo by Jay Nies

Mass by Candlelight in Frankenstein

Salve regina!



Father Daniel Merz, pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians parish in Frankenstein and St. George parish in Linn, offers Mass by candlelight on Jan. 1, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, in Our Lady Help of Christians Church. — Photo by Gayla Ocheskey



RIGHT: Pauline Markway, a member of St. Stanislaus parish in Wardsville, admires a traveling statue of the Blessed Mother under her title of Our Lady of Fatima on Nov. 15. The image was being taken to homes throughout the Jefferson City area. Its top stop at Auburn Ridge in Wardsville followed an afternoon at the home of Mrs. Markway's daughter and son-in-law, Wayne and Donna Bernskoetter. The statue is a replica of how visionaries at Fatima, Portugal, described the Blessed Mother as she appeared to them with messages of prayer and repentance in 1917. The purpose for the traveling statue is to promote a deeper relationship with Christ through the Rosary and through greater devotion to His beloved mother. — Photo by Donna Bernskoetter



Sedalia Sacred Heart High School students bring gift of Christmas to airmen of Whiteman AFB

By Hope Lecchi

Sedalia

For many, Christmastime is for family and being with ones they love.

But for many of the men and women who have made the sacrifice to serve their fellow man as members of the armed forces, being with family during this season is not possible.

Thanks to the efforts of members of the Sacred Heart Student Council and the Sedalia Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee, a sense of home was delivered to airmen of the 509th Security Forces at Whiteman

Air Force Base (WAFB) who were not able to be with their families during the holidays.

The Friday before Christmas, Sacred Heart Student Council (STUCO) members prepared nearly 200 stockings to be delivered to WAFB dorms later on Friday.

It was the second year student council members have been involved with the project.

"STUCO was invited to participate last year by Mykel Schlotterbeck, who is a member of the Military

Affairs Committee. She is also the mother of last year's SHS STUCO president," stated Sacred Heart STUCO Advisor Elyse Starke. "Mrs. Schlotterbeck has been working behind the scenes doing a great deal of work to pull this project together and we are honored to work with her and the Sedalia community again to make this happen."

According to Ms. Starke, the Military Affairs Committee has been working diligently to collect an array of stocking stuffers. Businesses

have contributed items for the stockings including peanuts, soda, and gift cards.

The Sedalia Area Chamber of Commerce gave the members money, which they used to buy additional items to fill the stockings.

Sacred Heart art students made Christmas cards to go into each stocking. Perhaps one of the sweetest treats was the addition of homemade and decorated Christmas cookies prepared by the student council members.

"Our soldiers won't be able



LEFT: Claire Smeltzer, left, Kelsey Hudson, Caten Lucchesi and Cody Damlo, foreground, help decorate Christmas cookies. **RIGHT:** Blaise Wilt decorates Christmas cookies for the stockings. Wilt and other members of the SHS Student Council were preparing more than 200 Christmas stockings to be delivered to airmen of the 509th Security Forces at Whiteman Air Force Base in Knob Noster.

— Photos by Hope Lecchi, courtesy of the *Sedalia Democrat*



the stockings.

Members hung the stockings with care on the dorm room doors of each member of the 509th Security Forces.

"Student Council's mission is to 'Lead. Serve. Inspire,'" STUCO President Maia Smith explained.

"This is a meaningful project for us because many of these airmen aren't that much older than us.

"They are making many sacrifices to serve

to have these goodies since they weren't able to be home with their families," event co-chair Summer Caton explained.

Ms. Caton said both planning and the event had been fun and a bonding experience for those involved. She added, "hopefully we might get some leftover cookies..."

The 16 members of the organization who are in grades nine through 12 traveled to Whiteman Air Force Base Friday afternoon to deliver

our country, and this is one small way we can say thanks," Ms. Smith added.

"Before we go home for break we want to take care of others who won't be seeing their family for Christmas ... and perhaps not for quite some time."

Ms. Lecchi is a reporter for the Sedalia Democrat newspaper. A version of this article was published Dec. 23. This version is presented here with permission.

HISPANIC

From page 1

Hispanic communities, and other parishioners.

"This pastoral strategy will provide support, consistency and continuity to our pastoral service to the Hispanic communities in our parishes," stated Deacon Enrique Castro, diocesan director of Intercultural and Marriage Ministries.

This collaborative ministry effort is part of a diocesan ministry project for Hispanic Permanent Deacons called *Evangelizando Juntas* ("Evangelizing Together"), aimed at supporting the ministry of parishes to Hispanic communities.

It is also in keeping with Bishop McKnight's often-stated vision for deacons serving as intermediaries within the Church and society, like the first deacons in the Book of Acts.

The plan emerged from discussions among the bishop; Monsignor Robert A. Kurwicky, diocesan vicar general; Deacon Castro, who is

one of the nine Hispanic deacons; and Father Patrick Dolan, who provides volunteer sacramental ministry for St. Mary parish in Milan and the St. Mary mission in Unionville and has helped with Hispanic ministry in northeastern Missouri.

They concluded that a more consistent Spanish-language worship schedule would be necessary to foster stable participation among Hispanic Catholics in the parishes.

Deacon Castro will coordinate this ministry on the bishop's behalf.

Bishop McKnight said it will take some time to see the benefit of a consistent schedule of services in Spanish in the parishes, "but it will be worth the effort and patience needed."

"Serving the Hispanic community in our midst brings with it an opportunity to be co-responsible and serve God's people together," he stated.

ANGRISANO

From page 4

The \$20-per-person cost will include lunch.

Mr. Angrisano is undoubtedly one of the most effective and versatile ministry leaders in the Church today.

He composed and sings such spiritual anthems as "Go Make A Difference" and "My Soul is Thirsty," as well as the popular "Mass of a Joyful Heart" arrangement of the Mass.

Young and old alike embrace the passionate message of faith, hope and love woven throughout his music and storytelling.

Always rooted in a spirit of humility and faithfulness, his easy, honest style of ministry is born from who he is: a com-

mitted witness to the life and love of Jesus Christ.

His presentation style has been likened to that of a magician: full of spontaneity and moving seamlessly from one phase to the next.

"I'm a storyteller, and it's very interactive," he said. "One minute you might be laughing, then you might get a serious story; then you're praying, and before you know it, you're laughing again."

For information, contact Mr. DeLaporte at jdelaporte@diojeffcity.org or at (573) 635-9127, ext. 233.

Register online at: www.diojeffcity.org/youth-ministry-annual-retreat/



By Father Don Antweiler

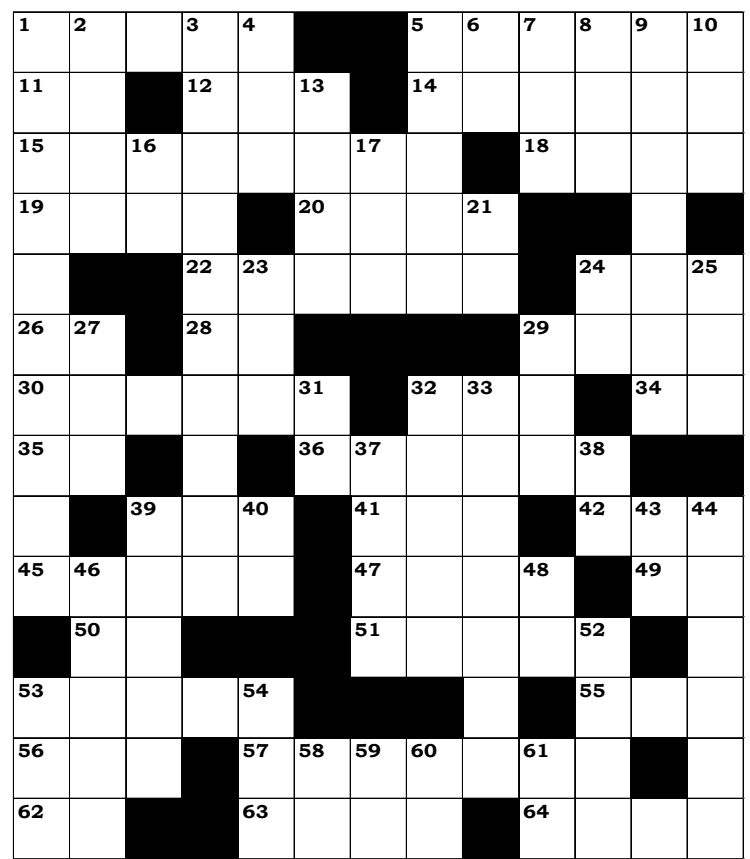
ACROSS

1. "I'm glad I'm a ____-town boy and I'm glad Marceline was my town," —Walt Disney.
5. I gave her a "____-up!" on her great performance!
11. On a recipe, letters for olive oil, used in salad dressings and cosmetics.
12. ____-la-la!
14. Alice in Wonderland's Mad ____ character.
15. For some reason a doctor doesn't call his job a job but a ____.
18. The ____ bridge in St. Louis, built in 1874, is a National Historic Landmark, which still carries vehicular, pedestrian, and Metrolink light rail traffic between St. Louis and Illinois. On its 100th anniv. the *NY Times* described it as "among the most beautiful works of man."
19. A type of sandwich.
20. A town in Alaska.
22. Marceline's Walt Disney Museum has the ____ Autopia kiddie-car ride, the only ride Walt allowed to leave a Disney property and operate elsewhere.
24. Lower digit.
26. At the time of the Civil War, this was the most populous State west of the Mississippi (abbr.).
28. Are you up to the challenge ____ not?
29. A type of soft drink beer.
30. He was ____ from office in the last election.
32. The foster father of Jesus to His friends, perhaps.
34. But isn't it always about ____, asked the befuddled egotist?
35. The priest was "elevated" to the title _____. Rev. Msgr.
36. A fruit or color.
39. A brand of underwear.
41. Tarzan, the ____ Man.
42. The judge imposed a ____ order on the court's proceedings so the press would not have an undue influence on the trial.
45. Mid Continent ____ and Wire Co. of Popular Bluff, Mo. is the largest nail manufacturer in America.
47. Perhaps foreshadowing his enterprising spirit, young Walt dressed up ____ animals with costumes and

- charged neighborhood kids a dime to see them. His parents made him return the money.
49. Prefix to form or part.
50. Mount Rushmore President's initials.
51. Treasury bond.
53. ____-Oop; comics caveman.
55. ____ generis; one of a kind.
56. ____ as a fox.
57. ____ S. Grant; Union General who started his Civil War career in Mo. chasing guerillas from Hannibal, through Monroe City, to Mexico, Mo. Later he went south through Ironton down to Belmont, Mo. where he actually first tasted battle.
62. One of the eight States adjoining Missouri (abbr.).
63. "...whenever a ____ or bear came to carry off a sheep I would go after it and attack it and rescue the prey from its mouth," (1 Samuel 17:34-35).
64. One of the Cartwright brothers.

DOWN

1. Second year students in high school or college.
2. "To tell the truth, ____ things of importance happened to me in Marceline than have happened since, or are likely to in the future," —Walt Disney.
3. The picture show in Marceline was where Disney's movie "The Great ____ Chase" premiered.
4. Abraham's nephew (Genesis 14:12, 14).
5. Marceline's Main Street is replicated as the Main Street entrance to every Walt Disney ____ park around the world.
6. That's a laugh!
7. Native Am. tribe Utah is named after.
8. Letters for Metropolitan Transit Authority, the largest public transit sys-



- tem in the U.S. serving the NYC metro area carrying 11 million rail passengers a day and 850,000 vehicles on 7 toll bridges and 2 tunnels.
9. Walt's boyhood home survives with the ____ Walt and brother Roy shared, unchanged from their childhood.
10. Plus 50's group (abbr.).
13. Things always look different in ____ sight.
16. One of the eight States adjoining Missouri (abbr.).
17. I feel like a little ____ in a big machine.
21. Phone home alien.
23. Anger.
24. Let's move on ____ the next topic.
25. Summer on the Seine.
27. An ump's call.
29. Abbr. for size on a pair of pants, perhaps.
31. "To praise God in our lives means all we ____ must be for His glory," —Arnobius of Sicca (Tunisia); d. 330; early Christian apologist during the terrible persecution of Roman Emperor Diocletian.
32. The first Disney Park outside the U.S. was established in this country.
33. Burdensome.
37. What Huck floated on down the Mississippi.
38. Abbr. for "for example," from the Latin "*exempli gratia*."
39. At the Disney home-
- stead, Walt would engage in what he called "____ botany," laying on the ground intently observing the details of plant and insect life. Hence Jiminy Cricket?
40. Letters for Disabled List in baseball.
43. He served on an ____ Hoc committee of the Parish Council.
44. "Feminine ____" is how Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis express the unique and powerful abilities of women to build up the faith, to lead and to transform our Church," —from *Extension Magazine*.
46. It took them all night to ____ up the vote.
48. Abbr. for first book in the New Testament.
52. The name the ExxonMobil gas brand is known as in Canada.
53. "____ and it will be given to you..." (Matthew 7:7).
54. Movie star ____ Brynner starred in "The King and I" (1956), "The Magnificent Seven" (1960), and "Westworld" (1973) among other movies.
58. Fifty-one in old Rome.
59. ____ ho ho and a bottle of rum.
60. Country internet code for Senegal.
61. ____, what's up, doc?

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INDIA

From page 1

Bishop McKnight also visited St. Joseph Church in Tapkara to seal 67 people with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

"I have traveled far to be here with you," he said, "and I represent all the clergy and lay faithful of the Diocese of Jefferson City in pledging our prayers and support for you."

From death to life

Located in East-central India, the Jashpur diocese is a rural area made up mostly of indigenous Oraon people — commonly known as Tribals.

Chronic manifestations of poverty are overshadowed by the people's joy-filled fidelity to the Gospel that was preached to their ancestors no more than three or four generations ago.

The Oraon people had been outcasts for centuries when Jesuit missionaries from Belgium arrived to offer the first Mass in the district in 1906.

The people had been subject to forced, unpaid labor, which left them poor, uneducated, full of misery and devoid of hope.

The missionaries helped them realize that were not inferior. In fact, they were created in the image and likeness of God, Who loved them enough to send His only Son to suffer, die and rise for them so they could spend all eternity with Him.

With that revelation came a call to worship God and repent of sinful ways while embracing the dignity and justice that are rightfully theirs.

Just as those missionaries gained people's trust and confidence by educating children, caring for the sick and advocating for human rights, present-day Catholics in and around the Jashpur diocese continue to preach the word with action.

The area is now about 23 percent Catholic, 10 times India's national average of 2.3 percent.

The Jashpur diocese's network of Catholic schools has helped thousands escape the poverty of subsistence farming.

Although the Indian gov-

ernment has enacted rigid anti-proselytizing laws in recent years, the Church continues to grow and thrive by revealing the presence of Christ in word and action.

All the while, tribal customs dating back to the time of Christ, baptized through revelation and His Good News, continue to be cherished and celebrated.

Serve with gratitude

The Ordination Mass began with an elaborate procession from the courtyard outside Bishop Emmanuel Kerketta's residence, into the cathedral, accompanied by prodigious singing.

Bishop McKnight noted that this was only his second opportunity to ordain priests since becoming a bishop in February 2018.

He reminded the candidates for Priesthood that they "are being called to an office, a ministry of high calling, not for any personal honor, but because of what the Father of Mercies wishes to accomplish through you."

Priestly ordination, he noted, is not a reward for a man's hard work and studies, nor a canonization proving his holiness.

"Instead, it is a gift from

More photos from this event have been posted in *The Catholic Missourian's* online edition, www.cathmo.com. Select "Photo Galleries" from the "Multimedia" tab on the menu bar.

the Lord for the Church to accomplish her mission in the world," he said. "The Gospel of Jesus Christ shall continue to be proclaimed and His ministry of reconciliation shall continue to be exercised through the humble, earthen vessels that we are."

The only fitting response to that calling is a heart filled with thanksgiving.

"This humble gratitude is, in fact, the very center of our lives as Christians, and it is the source and summit of all the Church's activities: the last-

ing legacy of Jesus's own perfect gratitude to the Father — what we know as the Eucharist," said Bishop McKnight.

He emphasized the dying-to-self that must accompany priestly ministry.

"My dear brothers, in this very sanctuary, you will join Saints Peter and Paul and countless others in laying down your lives in service to Christ's Church and His Gospel," he said.

He reminded the candidates that they must guard and preserve the sacred trust they will hold as priests.

"I pray that through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, you and I may serve faithfully, along with our brother priests, to shepherd our Church in the joy of the Gospel and with a profound sense of gratitude for His merciful love," he said.

A priest forever

At Bishop McKnight's invitation, the families of the candidates for Priesthood brought them forward and left them with the bishop at the altar.

Then came a procession consisting of two young boys carrying a yoke, followed by people scattering grains of rice, followed by two small trees in planting pots.

This symbolized how the ground had been prepared and the seeds planted, and through the work of God, the field was yielding a great harvest for the people of God.

Bishop McKnight asked the candidates for ordination a series of questions about their willingness to serve God and His people as priests for the rest of their life.

They promised to do so by



Bishop Emmanuel Kerketta of Jashpur, India, joins a crowd of people from his diocese in welcoming Bishop W. Shawn McKnight and a small delegation from the Jefferson City diocese to Kunkuri on Dec. 29, 2019.

— Photo by Jake Seifert

symbol not only of dying and rising with Christ but also of humility and total reliance on God.

Each candidate then knelt before his own bishop and promised to be obedient and respectful to him and his successors.

Bishop McKnight silently placed his hands on each of the candidates and summoned the Holy Spirit to descend upon them and consecrate them as priests forever.

The newly ordained clerics put on vestments and concelebrated the Mass with the rest of the priests.

The joyful recessional spilled

out into the cathedral plaza, with drums, dancing and singing, and continued for over an hour.

"In God's presence"

At Confirmation in Tapkara, Bishop McKnight emphasized the unity of the whole Church.

See PILGRIMAGE, page 23

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Fundraisers & Social Events

Jan. 11-12

St. Martins, St. Martin parish "Blest Art" sale, after all Masses

Jan. 12

Belle, St. Alexander parish breakfast, 7-11 am

Jan. 18

Fulton, K of C Ladies Auxiliary Candlelight Lasagna Dinner, 6-8 pm; **Linn**, St. George School Taste of Italy event, 4-9:30 pm, activity center; **Mary's Home**, Our Lady of the Snows parish Shiloh Dance, 7:30-11:30 pm, school gym; **Pilot Grove**, Aaron Imhoff Memorial Benefit Dinner & Auction, 5 pm, Pilot Grove Community Building

Jan. 19

Columbia, K of C pancake breakfast, after 8:30 Mass, Sacred Heart activity building; **Krakow**, St. Gertrude parish sausage dinner, 11 am-6 pm; **St. Thomas**, K of C pancake & sausage breakfast, 8-11:30 am

Jan. 22

Sedalia, K of C Family Night Buffet, 4-7 pm

Jan. 25

Mexico, Ladies of St. Brendan Quarter Auction, 5 pm, parish hall; **Taos**, St. Francis Xavier School chili supper & silent auction, meal 5:30-7:30 pm, silent auction 8 pm

Jan. 26

Frankenstein, St. Mary School Archery Breakfast, 7-10:30 am

Meetings & Conferences

Jan. 10

Jefferson City, "Confirmed in the Spirit: New policy, best practices and practical resources for Confirmation," 9 am-3 pm, Alphonse J. Schwartze Memorial Catholic Center, for info or to register visit diojeffcity.org/registration-workshops/

Jan. 11

Moberly, "Confirmed in the Spirit: New policy, best practices and practical resources for Confirmation," 9 am-3 pm, St. Pius X parish, for info or to register visit diojeffcity.org/registration-workshops/

Jan. 14

Westphalia, "Let's Talk Faith: Angels," women's ministry program, 6:30-8 pm, K of C Hall, for info visit diojeffcity.org/womens-ministry/

Jan. 18

Jefferson City, "Confirmed in the Spirit: New policy, best practices and practical resources for Confirmation," 9 am-3 pm, Alphonse J. Schwartze Memorial Catholic Center, for info or to register visit diojeffcity.org/registration-workshops/

Jan. 19

Monroe City, Annual Pro-Life March, 5 pm, K of C Hall

Jan. 20-24

St. Meinrad, IN, 11th Annual National Winter Chant Conference, St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, for info or to register, visit saintmeinrad.edu/continuing-formation/chant-institute/

Jan 22-25

Washington DC, Annual March for Life pilgrimage, for info call Kris Hartman at (573) 635-9127 or email khartman@diojeffcity.org

Jan. 23

Columbia, Cursillo School of Leaders, 7-8 pm, Our Lady of Lourdes parish's Flanagan Hall

Liturgical

Jan. 21

Mary's Home, Seeking Christ for our Nation Mass, 6 pm, Our Lady of the Snows Church

Jan. 22

Chamois, Pro-life Rosary on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, 8 am, Most Pure Heart of Mary Church

Jan. 26

Creve Coeur, "They Showed us Unusual Kindness," ecumenical gathering for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, with Archbishop Robert J. Carlson presiding, 7-8:30 pm, St. Monica Church, 12132 Olive Blvd.

Retreats & Spiritual Renewal

Jan. 11

Columbia, "Acts 2:42: A Night of Dinner & Prayer," featuring dinner, praise & worship mu-

sic, talk, and Adoration and Reconciliation, 6-8:30 pm, St. Thomas More Newman Center

Youth & Young Adults

Jan 22-25

Washington DC, Annual March for Life pilgrimage, for info call Kris Hartman at (573) 635-9127 or email khartman@diojeffcity.org

Health & Wellness

Jan. 19

Jefferson City, Blood drive, 8:30 am-1 pm, St. Peter parish, Selinger Centre

Jan. 26

Columbia, Blood drive, 8 am-1 pm, St. Thomas More Newman Center, multipurpose room

DOYLE

From page 8

consent of the will. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, the Church's official "guidebook" on liturgy, notes, "the priest calls upon the whole community to take part in the penitential act, which, after a brief pause for silence, it does by means of a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the priest's absolution, which, however, lacks the efficacy of the sacrament of penance" (No. 51).

The penitential rite (as well as the reception of Holy Communion and other acts of prayer and devotion) can, though, forgive venial sins. Strictly speaking, one is obliged to go to the sacrament of penance only for serious sins — although it is a certainly a good idea to confess regularly even for lesser sins and imperfections.

In 2013, Pope Francis revealed that he himself goes to confession every two weeks and considers it the best path to spiritual healing and health.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.

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Anniversaries

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes
Anthony & Carolyn Bartal, 55 years

Brinktown, Holy Guardian Angels
Tim & Dana Simmons, 23 years

Jonesburg, St. Patrick
Bob & Pat Geisz, 55 years
Chad & Linda Stewart, 18 years

Kahoka, St. Michael
Adrian & Mary Meierotto, 48 years

Kirkville, Mary Immaculate
Larry & Madonna Sorell, 62 years
Clayton & Janet Dillavou, 57 years
Richard & Leticia Collop, 51 years

Lake Ozark, Our Lady of the Lake
Jim & Pat Starcevich, 60 years
Deacon Paul & Marilee Poulter, 52 years
Tom & Caroline Loraine, 48 years

Marceline, St. Bonaventure
Fred & Joyce Clapman, 41 years
Mark & Barb Schmitt, 37 years
Reid & Melinda Fessler, 29 years

Martinsburg, St. Joseph
Dale & Donna Isgrig, 48 years
Mike & Vickie Duenke, 26 years

Mary's Home, Our Lady of the Snows
Glenn & Betty Pound, 30 years

Milan, St. Mary
Bill & Barbara Phillips, 53 years

Montgomery City, Immaculate Conception
Tom and Pat Westhoff, 41 years
Jeff & Julie Porter, 35 years
Dion & Cindy Thurman, 28 years
John & Tudie Simpson, 27 years
Matt & Karen Milner, 26 years

Palmyra, St. Joseph
Grant & Joyce Hess, 68 years
WT & Cynthia Johnson, 44 years
Jeff & Nancy Keim, 27 years

Rolla, St. Patrick
Arlo & Barbara Robb, 65 years

Russellville, St. Michael
John & June Riegel, 58 years
Galen & Debbie Meller, 45 years
Rodney & Lucy Schulte, 36 years

Sedalia, St. Vincent de Paul
Fran & Ann Koetting, 68 years
Ruben & Pat Twenter, 68 years
Robert & Virginia Hoskins, 65 years
Earl & Sharon Perkins, 51 years

Vienna, Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Mick & Debbie Byrd, 40 years
Ron & Judy Mitchell, 40 years

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels
Kenny & Conie Clark, 10 years

Baptisms

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul — **Evalyn Charlee Day**, daughter of Adam & Patti Day; **Anna Grace Lang**, daughter of Jack & Monica Lang

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — **Juliette Nelson, Samuel Nelson**

Jefferson City, St. Peter — **Landon and Callie Connally, Gabriel Redel**

Kirkville, Mary Immaculate — **Liam Charles Fortenberry**, son of Tyler & Katherine Fortenberry

Linn, St. George — **Maren Grace Needels**, daughter of Justin & Stacy Needels

Mary's Home, Our Lady of the Snows — **Eve Renae Lepper**, daughter of Brad & Tara Lepper

Rich Fountain, Sacred Heart — **Hallie Jo and Jocelyn Ann Hedges**, daughter of Joshua & Chelsey Hedges; **Bo Lewis Wolfe**, son of Dalton & Brooke Wolfe

Tipton, St. Andrew — **Joslyn Noel Kempker**, daughter of Steven & Kaitlin Kempker

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels — **Nola Jo Ewigman**, daughter of Andrew & Lyndsey Ewigman; **Nova Kaye Stallo**, daughter of Ryan & Melissa Stallo

Marriages

Indian Creek, St. Stephen — **Talley Kendrick & Sam Smith**

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Taylor Grellner & Kyle Schenewerk**

Linn, St. George — **Pamela Koeningsfeld & Gary Radmacher**

Rich Fountain, Sacred Heart — **Jordyn Williams & Matt Eisterhold**

Birthdays

Father Clarence Wiederholt — a retired priest of the Jefferson City diocese, his 90th birthday on Jan. 5

Argyle, St. Aloysius — **Rita Kampeter**, her 99th on Jan. 9

Mary's Home, Our Lady of the Snows — **Lucille Limbach**, her 93rd on Jan. 6

Deaths

Margaret Benne, 92 — grandmother of Father Joshua J. Duncan, associate pastor of Immaculate Conception parish in Jefferson City & diocesan associate vocations director — on Dec. 10. She was a former Chancery employee, having worked as secretary in the School Office and in the Vocation Office. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 14 in Immaculate Conception Church in Jefferson City, with Fr. Duncan presiding. Burial was in Resurrection Cemetery.

Peader (Peter) Gormley — brother of Father Kevin Gormley, a retired priest of the Jefferson City diocese — on Dec. 17 in Ireland. The Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 21 in Ireland, with Fr. Gormley presiding.

Felix J. Juergensmeyer, 90 — brother of Sister Edith Jurgensmeyer, SSND, a Jefferson City native who served in the diocese for many years — on Jan. 1. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 7 at St. Boniface Church in Koeltztown. Burial was in the parish cemetery.

Bonnots Mill, St. Louis of France — **Roger P. Vogel**

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul — **Sawyer Quinlan**

Brinktown, Holy Guardian Angels — **Martin B. Bauer**

California, Annunciation — **Mary "Teresa" Kirchoff**

Camdenton, St. Anthony — **Laverne Loew**

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — **D.L. Gladbach**

Columbia, Sacred Heart — **Dr. Louis A. Corwin Jr.**

Eldon, Sacred Heart — **Karen L. Spencer**

Ewing, Queen of Peace — **Beverly Sparks**

Freeburg, Holy Family — **Jerome F. Falter, Stella Dresel**

Hannibal, Holy Family — **Jamie Jones**

Hermann, St. George — **Helen C. Epple, Verus Eldringhoff, Charmaine Klott, Robert LeRoy**

Jefferson City, Cathedral of St. Joseph — **Helen E. Cook**

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **John R. Drainer, Cheryl A. Eveler**

Jefferson City, St. Peter — **Daniel L. Corrigan**

Marshall, St. Peter — **Janice Arth, William E. Rieth**

Meta, St. Cecilia — **Bernard Hake**

Moberly, St. Pius X — **Virginia Miller**

St. Martin, St. Martins — **Harold W. Raithe**

Sedalia, St. Vincent de Paul — **Betty Vodicka**

Taos, St. Francis Xavier — **Ronald E. Ahlers, Mary M. Selva**

Tipton, St. Andrew — **Delmar Fassler**

Wardsville, St. Stanislaus — **Norbert B. Bernskoetter, Michael A. Hoelscher, Rosie E. Redel**

Honors

Monsignor David Cox, pastor of Mary Immaculate parish in Kirkville and the St. Rose of Lima mission in Novinger, as the honoree for the June 29, 2019, Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Exemplification for northeastern Missouri. He is a Fourth Degree Knight and a former state chaplain for the Knights' Fourth Degree.

Mark Middendorf, a member of St. Patrick parish and Knights of Columbus St. Patrick Council 2627 in Rolla, as Knight of the Month for September 2019 by the Knights of Columbus Missouri State Council.

Whitney Pleus, a teacher at Immaculate Conception School in Jefferson City, with a teacher's award from Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1003 in St. Martins

Elections

Hermitage, St. Bernadette — **Ron Carter, Mike Kern, Nancy Rotert**, parish council members

Holts Summit, St. Andrew — **Lynn Overton**, parish council member

Tipton, St. Andrew — **Melissa Broyles, Cheryl Knipp, Heather Martin**, parish council members

Names for the People Page

Information for the People Page comes from parish correspondents and individual parishioners, as well as bulletins and newspapers. Submissions for anniversaries (10 years or more), birthdays (90 years or more), and baptisms, deaths, marriages and initiations of local parishioners may be e-mailed to editor@diojeffcity.org; FAXed to (573) 635-2286 (please designate *The Catholic Missourian* as the recipient); or mailed to: *The Catholic Missourian*, P.O. Box. 104900, Jefferson City, MO 65110-4900.

Crossword puzzle answers

S	S	O	H	N	O	I	L	K
U	S	E	S	X	T	U	X	S
I	U	S	U	E	T	T	V	S
N	L	O	N	L	T	V	S	
E	D	M	R	V	E	T	E	S
G	V	G	E	A	P	E	B	E
M	E	N	A	O	I	T	R	S
L	O	O	R	O	R	O	M	
E	O	L	E	G	D	I	O	
R	M	O	M	O	O	R	E	H
S	D	A	V	E	C	I	C	P
R	E	L	V	H	H	O	O	O
S	B	M	U	H	L	T	V	S

Making room at the inn



Students of St. George School in Hermann take part in “Las Posadas” on Dec. 20, a reenactment of Mary and Joseph’s search for shelter in Bethlehem when Jesus was to be born. Having taken an imaginary journey around the world throughout Advent to learn about different customs and traditions, they dressed in traditional clothes from some of those countries and paraded around the school for Las Posadas, ending with a celebration.
— Photo from St. George Catholic School’s Facebook page

O Holy night!



Students of Holy Family School in Freeburg dramatize an indoor and outdoor “Journey to Bethlehem” on an evening late in Advent.
— Photos from Holy Family School’s Facebook page



Visiting the crib



Kindergartners at St. Joseph School in Salisbury visit the Nativity scene in St. Joseph Church on Jan. 7. “Their love for baby Jesus is unmatched!” their teachers stated. “If you see a kindergartner, ask them to tell you the story of Baby Jesus and all the visitors that come to welcome Him. You’ll be glad you did!”
— Photo from St. Joseph School’s Facebook page

Green and Grinchy



Second-graders at Holy Family School in Hannibal celebrate “Grinch Day.” During Advent, the students had helped the Grinch’s heart grow by doing random acts of kindness. For Grinch Day, they did activities based on Dr. Seuss’s *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and celebrated sharing kindness.
— Photo from Holy Family School’s Facebook page

Jesus wants John to baptize Him

By Jennifer Ficaglia
Catholic News Service

John the Baptist was preaching in the desert of Judea.

He wore clothing made of camel's hair and a belt. And all he ate was locust and wild honey.

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" he cried to all who would listen.

John's preaching fulfilled a prophecy about the coming of the Messiah that can be found in the Old Testament book of Isaiah: "A voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.'"

People from Jerusalem and all over Judea traveled to the desert to visit John. The people would confess their sins, and John would baptize them in



the Jordan River.

Sometimes, the Pharisees and Sadducees would come to the baptism. This angered John.

"You brood of vipers! Who

warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" John asked. "Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. ... Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every

Through baptism, the *Catechism* says in No. 537, Christians are "sacramentally assimilated to Jesus" and "go down into the water with Jesus in order to rise with Him, be reborn of water and the Spirit so as to become the Father's beloved son in the Son and 'walk in newness of life.'"

tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

John also said that he was not the only person who would be administering baptism to the people.

"I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the One Who is coming after me is mightier than I," he said. "I am not worthy to carry His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand. He will clear His threshing floor and gather His wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

One day, Jesus went into the desert to visit John and to be baptized by him.

John was surprised.

"I need to be baptized by You, and yet You are coming to

me?" he exclaimed.

Jesus looked at John.

"Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness," Jesus said.

John then agreed to baptize Jesus.

When Jesus came up from the water, the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God descended like a dove and came upon Him.

Then a voice from heaven could be heard.

"This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased," the voice said.

Read more about it... Matthew 3

1. Who was baptizing people in the Jordan River?

2. What did Jesus want John to do?

Bible Accent

Why did Jesus, Who is sinless, want to be baptized?

In Matthew 3:13-15, we read that John the Baptist hesitated to baptize Jesus.

"I need to be baptized by You, and yet You are coming to me?" John said in surprise.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says in No. 536 that Jesus' baptism shows that He has accepted and inaugurated His mission as God's suffering Servant.

"He allows Himself to be numbered among sinners; He is already 'the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world,'" the *Catechism* notes. "Already He is anticipating the 'baptism' of His bloody death. Already He is coming to 'fulfill all righteousness,' that is, He is submitting Himself entirely to His Father's will: Out of love He consents to this baptism of death for the remission of our sins."



Saint Spotlight

St. Marianne Cope was born in Germany in 1838. When she was 2, she and her family moved to the U.S. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis in Syracuse, New York, and for 20 years, she was a teacher and hospital administrator. In 1883, she and six sisters moved to Hawaii to minister to those with leprosy, now known as Hansen's disease. In 1888, the sisters opened a home on the island of Molokai for women and girls with leprosy. They continued St. Damien de Veuster's work after his death. St. Marianne died on Molokai in 1918. She was canonized in 2012, and we remember her on Jan. 23.

Essay

Why is it important for Christians to be baptized?

Puzzle

Match the quotation about repentance with the Scripture passage from which it came. Write the chapter and verse on the blank after the quotation.

2 Pt. 3:9 Prv. 28:13 Rv. 3:19 Acts 3:19

1. "Those who conceal their sins do not prosper, but those who confess and forsake them obtain mercy." _____
2. "He is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." _____
3. "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away." _____
4. "Those whom I love, I reprove and chastise. Be earnest, therefore, and repent." _____



Answers: 1. Prv. 28:13; 2. 2 Pt. 3:9; 3. Acts 3:19; 4. Rv. 3:19.



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Catholic faith helps Mary Higgins Clark bring characters to life

By Mike Mastromatteo
Catholic News Service

Toronto

How does one go from being a widowed mother of five children to a best-selling suspense writer with a huge international following?

If you happen to be Mary Higgins Clark, you would point to nothing more than persistence, taking advantage of opportunities and plain hard work.

Author of 40 suspense novels, four short-story collections, two children's books, a historical novel and an enduring memoir, Higgins Clark released her latest work, *Kiss the Girls and Make Them Cry* in November.

The prolific, 90-plus-year-old New Yorker shows no signs of slowing down in her lifelong ambition to tell good stories.

Higgins Clark now is working on a new title with co-author Alafair Burke, daughter of noted Catholic novelist James Lee Burke. The Higgins Clark-Burke writing team already has five jointly written suspense novels to their credit, while with her daughter Carol, Higgins Clark has produced another five lively mysteries.

"I'm just getting to work with Alafair on *Just Take My Heart*, our next collaboration. I have an idea for my next solo



Mary Higgins Clark, author of 40 suspense novels, four short story collections, two children's books, a historical novel and a memoir, is pictured in an undated photo.

— CNS photo/courtesy
Mary Higgins Clark

novel, but it's in the very early stages," Higgins Clark recently told Catholic News Service (CNS).

A key element in most of Higgins Clark's work is the presence of a strong, courageous — and Catholic — heroine who, while often accomplished and living the good life, triumphs over violence, intrigue and adversity to make things right in the end.

The appearance of priests, churches and Catholic schools

is no accident in the Higgins Clark canon.

"My novels almost always have at the core of the story a strong young woman who is Catholic," Higgins Clark said. "Her faith will help her persevere. In *The Shadow of Your Smile* and *The Lost Years*, Catholicism was a central element of the story versus the background of the central character."

But does this make Higgins Clark a "Catholic writer" or a writer who happens to be Catholic?

"I'm a writer who happens to be Catholic," she said. "It's no surprise that the Catholic faith, which has played a large role in my life, will be a key influence on my characters."

In a 2006 critical review of Higgins Clark's work, one author noted her tendency to write primarily about "very nice people" confronted with the forces of evil, and yet work their way to deliverance through their own courage and persistence.

Higgins Clark says her characters combine courage and often faith to find a way out of their predicaments. As to her use of Catholic protagonists and heroines, she points to a piece of advice she received as a young writer in a workshop. "My professor said, 'Write what you know.' I'd grown up observing examples of Catholic women who were strong

Movie Ratings



Adults and
Adolescents

Cats (PG)
A Hidden Life (PG-13)
Little Women (PG)
Love and Mercy: Faustina (not rated)
Playmobil: The Movie (PG)
Spies in Disguise (PG)



Adults

Black Christmas (PG-13)
Dark Waters (PG-13)
Jumanji: the Next Level (PG-13)
Just Mercy (PG-13)
Knives Out (PG-13)
Richard Jewell (R)
The Two Popes (PG-13)
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker (PG-13)



Limited Adult
Audience

Bombshell (R)
The Irishman (R)



Morally
Offensive

Queen & Slim (R)
Uncut Gems (R)

Ratings are supplied by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Film and Broadcasting Office. Visit www.usccb.org for current reviews.

figures and persevered against difficult odds. It was natural to model my characters after the people I knew."

Being in the know about the Catholic faith and its mysteries, Higgins Clark does not shy away from using elements such as prayer and the miraculous in her fiction. *The Shadow of Your Smile*, for example, introduces a miracle cure as a plot element in the author's story of intrigue and murder involving ancient Church manuscripts. Here, a supporting character, Dr. Monica Callaghan, marvels at the faith of an anguished mother as her young son Michael apparently overcomes terminal cancer.

"I cannot understand why I was so resistant to the idea that the power of prayer was the cause of Michael's return to health," the character Monica proclaims. "I was a witness to the absolute act of faith of his mother when I told her he was terminally ill. It was arrogant of me to be so dismissive of her faith, especially since the proof of it is her 8-year-old healthy little boy."

Higgins Clark had "zero reservations" about having one

of her characters admit to the possibility of miracles.

"As a physician, Monica believes in the power of medicine and treatment to heal," Higgins Clark told CNS. "It's natural for her to think that there has to be some rational explanation for why a terminally ill young boy is now healthy. In her mind, she had to progress to the recognition that there is another source of healing outside traditional medicine: faith that can produce miracles."

Another strong influence on Higgins Clark's work is what singer Billy Joel would term a New York state of mind. Higgins Clark was reared on the streets and in the Catholic schools of the Bronx. She attended St. Francis Xavier School and the Villa Maria Academy, at the time administered by the Congregation of Notre Dame.

Listing the author's many awards and honorary degrees would take a column in itself. However Higgins Clark's Church-affiliated awards include a Dame of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, a Dame of Malta, a Lady of the Holy

See CLARK, page 23

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PILGRIMAGE

From page 17

He noted that the candidates for confirmation had already received the Holy Spirit in baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

In Confirmation, the Holy Spirit bestows gifts for service in the Church and the world.

“To be a disciple of Jesus Christ means that we follow Him in laboring for the conversion of souls by taking up our own crosses daily,” he said.

“We need the gift of the Spirit to bring to fruition the new life given in baptism,” he stated. “The gift of the Holy Spirit is necessary for us to fulfill our own role in the life and mission of the Church.”

He noted that with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit comes supernatural insight into “how our universal faith applies in the concrete circumstances in everyday life,” along with “the courage to live out that faith.”

He urged those being confirmed never to be afraid to give themselves completely to Christ and follow the call of the Good Shepherd, “Who desires to lead us into Paradise so that we may be in God’s presence for eternity.”

“Lord of the Resurrection”

At the jubilee celebration for the cathedral, Bishop McKnight joined Bishop Kerketta, Archbishop Felix Topo of Ranchi, principal celebrant, other bishops and archbishops and the provincials of several religious congregations at the altar.

“I am very much edified and fascinated by the cultural richness of India,” Bishop McKnight stated, “especially the local cultural heritage and the simple lifestyle of the indigenous people.”

He said a jubilee celebration is an invitation to look to God with a grateful heart for all the wonderful things He has done, and to pray for His continued assistance.



Bishop W. Shawn McKnight joins Bishop Emmanuel Kerketta of Jashpur, India, in taking in the sights and sounds of the Cathedral of the Holy Rosary in Kunkuri. — Photo by Jake Seifert

Local choirs led the various hymns and colorful dances during the three-hour Liturgy.

Afterward, the people gathered in the courtyard outside the cathedral for a celebration of local culture, with music and drama contrasting life before and after the arrival of Catholic Christianity.

“May the Lord of the Resur-

rection bring peace and prosperity to this great land,” said Bishop McKnight, “and may the Holy Spirit fill you all with the Joy of the Gospel in this blessed New Year.”

Later in their journey, Bishop McKnight, Bishop Kerketta and fellow pilgrims went to visit Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro, papal ambassador for India and Nepal, at his residence in New Delhi.

The group discussed vocations and perpetual adoration chapels.

After visiting several other sites of spiritual, cultural and historical significance in other parts of India, Bishop McKnight planned to join his fellow bishops from Missouri, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska on a pilgrimage to Vatican City for their *ad limina* visit with Pope Francis.

Contributing to this report was Father Vikas Bara, secretary to Bishop Kerketta.

Prayer for victims of human trafficking

God of Light, we pray for all the people — men, women and children — hidden in the darkness of modern day slavery. Help us shine Your light into the homes, streets, factories and brothels in our own neighborhoods and around the world where people are enslaved. The darkness is as light to You, O Lord. No person in any corner of the world is hidden from Your sight. Help us shine Your light. Amen.

— from Catholic Relief Services

CLARK

From page 22

Sepulchre of Jerusalem, a Graymoor Award from the Franciscan Friars, and a Christopher Life Achievement award.

Today Higgins Clark attends Mass at St. Gabriel the Archangel parish in Saddle River, New Jersey. In a salute to the parish community, Higgins Clark once incorporated its pastor, Msgr. Frank Del Prete as a character in her book *I’ve Got My Eyes on You*.

It’s little wonder the positive experience

of the writer’s Catholic faith is clearly expressed in her large body of work.

The main characters are courageous and upright, the Church is portrayed as a place of comfort, inspiration and refuge, and nary a profane word is ever heard in the dialogue.

The happy endings that characterize the vast majority of Higgins Clark’s stories are justified by the author’s basic sense of justice and goodness prevailing over evil.

And while Higgins Clark is no simple apologist for the faith, she can still joke about her fiction not putting the Church in a bad light.

“I don’t recall if I’ve ever created a character that was Catholic and a villain,” she said. “If I did, I hope I portrayed him or her as a fallen-away Catholic.”

Mastromatteo is a writer and editor based in Toronto.

Daily Readings

Sunday, Jan 12

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD
Is. 42:1-4, 6-7
Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10
Acts 10:34-38
Mt. 3:13-17

Monday, Jan 13

1 Sm. 1:1-8
Ps. 116:12-19
Mk. 1:14-20

Tuesday, Jan 14

1 Sm. 1:9-20
(Ps.) 1 Sm. 2:1, 4-8abcd
Mk. 1:21-28

Wednesday, Jan 15

1 Sm. 3:1-10, 19-20
Ps. 40:2, 5, 7-10
Mk. 1:29-39

Thursday, Jan 16

1 Sm. 4:1-11
Ps. 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25
Mk. 1:40-45

Friday, Jan 17

St. Anthony, abbot
1 Sm. 8:4-7, 10-22a
Ps. 89:16-19
Mk. 2:1-12

Saturday, Jan 18

1 Sm. 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1
Ps. 21:2-7
Mk. 2:13-17

Sunday, Jan 19

Is. 49:3, 5-6
Ps. 40:2, 4, 7-10
1 Cor. 1:1-3
Jn. 1:29-34

Monday, Jan 20

1 Sm. 15:16-23
Ps. 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23
Mk. 2:18-22

Tuesday, Jan 21

St. Agnes, virgin, martyr
1 Sm. 16:1-13
Ps. 89:20-22, 27-28
Mk. 2:23-28

Wednesday, Jan 22

Day of prayer for the legal protection of unborn children
1 Sm. 17:32-33, 37, 40-51
Ps. 144:1b, 2, 9-10
Mk. 3:1-6

Thursday, Jan 23

2 Sm. 18:6-9; 19:1-7
Ps. 56:2-3, 9-13
Mk. 3:7-12

Friday, Jan 24

St. Francis de Sales, bishop, doctor of the Church
1 Sm. 24:3-21
Ps. 57:2-4, 6, 11
Mk. 3:13-19

Saturday, Jan 25

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE
Acts 22:3-16
Ps. 117:1bc, 2
Mk. 16:15-18

The Holy Father’s prayer intentions for January:

We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

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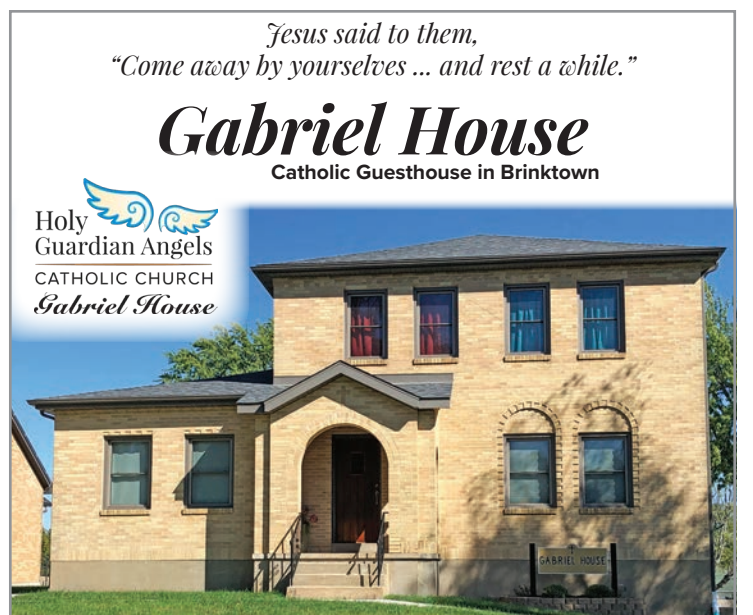


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