

Our Call to Greater Communion

Find the full text of Bishop McKnight's pastoral letter and the new diocesan pastoral plan in a specially designed pull-out section.

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The CATHOLIC MISSOURIAN

February 19, 2021 • Vol. 64 No. 17

Newspaper of the Diocese of Jefferson City

Pastoral plan a roadmap for next 3 years of ministry



Calls everyone to take ownership of the Church's mission

See full text of the plan and the bishop's pastoral letter, Pages 11-14

By Jay Nies

A new three-year pastoral plan for the Jefferson City diocese focuses on building-up the Body of Christ by strengthening and renewing the life of every parish.

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight released the plan, the result of a two-year diocesan-wide discernment process and an unprecedented level of input from parishioners of all ages, on Feb. 6.

He signed the document while celebrating Mass with college students during their SEEK21 conference in the St. Thomas More Newman Center Chapel in Columbia.

It was his third anniversary as bishop of this diocese.

He pointed out in his homily that young people figure heavily into the plan and will be essential in carrying out the spirit and specifics of it.

"You have the energy and you have a fresh pair of eyes to help our Church transform into what the Lord is calling us to be," he told them.

Titled "A Steward's Journey: Our Call to Greater Communion," the plan will serve as a three-year roadmap for the Church's ministry in these 38 counties, including life during and beyond the pandemic.

"This plan doesn't provide us with a mission," Bishop McKnight noted. "That was already given to us by our Lord, Jesus Christ, 2,000 years ago: to proclaim the Kingdom of God."

"But we do need a plan," he said, "a

See PASTORAL PLAN, page 17

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight signs his first pastoral letter as bishop of Jefferson City, promulgating the new pastoral plan for the Jefferson City diocese, while celebrating Mass with college students Feb. 6 in the St. Thomas More Newman Center Chapel in Columbia.

— Photo by Jay Nies

Lent is a time to grow in faith, hope and love and to share them with others, pope says

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Vatican City

As Christians pray, fast and give alms during Lent, they also should consider giving a smile and offering a kind word to people feeling alone or frightened because of the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis said.

"Love rejoices in seeing others grow. Hence it suffers when others are anguished, lonely, sick, homeless, despised or in need," the pope wrote in his message for Lent 2021.

The message, released by the Vatican Feb. 12, focuses on Lent as "a time for renewing faith, hope and love" through the traditional practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. And, by going to confession.

Throughout the message, Pope Francis emphasized how

the Lenten practices not only promote individual conversion, but also should have an impact on others.

"By receiving forgiveness in the sacrament that lies at the heart of our process of conversion, we in turn can spread forgiveness to others," he said. "Having received forgiveness ourselves, we can offer it through our willingness to enter into attentive dialogue with others and to give comfort to those experiencing sorrow and pain."

The pope's message contained several references to his encyclical "*Fratelli Tutti*, on Fraternity and Social Friendship."

For example, he prayed that during Lent Catholics would be "increasingly concerned with 'speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement, and not words

See LENT, page 23

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St. Patrick P.O. pictorial cancellation

A green Irish Tree of Life will adorn mail sent from the town of St. Patrick throughout March.

The specially designed image will adorn the 2021 pictorial cancellation and commemorative envelope that will be available for purchase from



Only One In The World.”

The women of Shrine of St. Patrick Parish will prepare the envelopes and take them to the St. Patrick Post Office for mailing.

Send a mailing list with payment for each envelope to: Shrine of St.

March 1-31.

The symbol honors the importance of family and heritage.

The envelopes can be purchased for \$2 apiece, which includes the envelope, postage, insert with an Irish greeting, and the cachet stamping of “St. Patrick, Mo. — The

Patrick, P.O. Box 34, St. Patrick, MO 63466.

To have these envelopes mailed on a certain day, please provide that information.

This is one of the most important fundraisers for the Shrine of St. Patrick, dating back to 1936 when the cachet was first developed.

Women's ministry video series

The Women's Ministry of Jefferson City was established in order to support each other in their spiritual journeys. Some of the women of the diocese connect with each other in their spiritual journeys. Some of the women of the diocese have shared stories of

their faith journey in podcasts.

These stories (diojeffcity.org/womens-ministry/reflections-from-within/) are from ordinary women doing the best they can to serve their families, their parishes, their communities and, above all, their God.

Their experiences contain familiar themes of sorrow, challenges, hope, faith, love and joy.

Each week, there will be a new podcast on this website.

“Let us go to our favorite resting places with our favorite beverages and spend some time with our sisters in Christ by listening to these podcasts,” said LeAnn Korsmeyer, diocesan director of parish and charitable services and of women's ministry.

Junior High Religion Teacher Needed



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St. Joseph Cathedral School in Jefferson City is seeking a full-time, junior high religion teacher for the 21-22 school year. To be considered, applicants must be practicing Catholics with a strong understanding of the doctrine and spirituality of the Catholic faith. A degree or background in theology and education are preferred. This teacher will work with students from 6th-8th grade and will also co-coordinate retreats and activities for the 8th-grade class. Contact Spencer Allen at sallen@sjcs.mo.org.

Position Openings - Chancery Office



The Chancery Office of the Diocese of Jefferson City has several positions open in the Jefferson City office at 2207 West Main Street:

Maintenance Worker — Full-time position with at least 5 years experience in the following areas: custodial services and meeting room set-up; general carpentry, painting, plumbing and electrical repairs; performing general building maintenance and some groundskeeping; maintaining safety of sidewalks and steps to building. Previous experience overseeing contracts such as snow removal, grass cutting, fire and safety inspections and elevator inspections is helpful. Qualified candidates should email resume to HRDir@diojeffcity.org.

Administrative Assistants — Two opportunities for experienced, take-charge, confidential administrative assistants supporting multiple Directors within the Chancery office. This is a great fit for someone who enjoys variety in their work day, setting priorities, composing correspondence and scheduling. The ideal candidate will have at least 5 years' experience supporting an executive level leader. Candidates are encouraged to apply through indeed.com and complete Word and Excel assessments.

Director of Religious Education and Youth/Young Adult Ministry — Administer the curriculum approval process for parish-based religious education. Provide direct support for, and development of, parish-based young adult leaders and youth ministers in the outreach, evangelization, faith formation and pastoral care of their youth; serve as liaison between Newman Center campus ministers and the Chancery; oversee the coordination of diocesan-supported youth ministry events at the diocesan, regional and national levels; and exercise diligence and oversight for assigned budget. Capability of ministering across cultures, with well-developed social media skills. Master's degree in catechetics, religious education, theology or youth ministry required. Qualified candidates should email resume to HRDir@diojeffcity.org.

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

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight
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Pray for deceased priests

- Feb. 27 — **Fr. James J. O'Sullivan**, Sacred Heart, Eldon (2004)
Mar. 1 — **Fr. Lawrence P. Mullen**, St. Joseph, Edina; and St. Aloysius, Baring (1996)
Mar. 3 — **Fr. Edward A. Doyle**, Immaculate Conception, Montgomery City (2019)
Mar. 6 — **Fr. Thomas J. Gray**, St. Stephen, Indian Creek (1987)

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I.C. Loose Creek students pursue prayerful preparations for Lent

By Jay Nies

“Lent is not just a time for fasting and giving things up. It’s actually a time for God.”

Sixth-grader Lilly Borgmeyer shared one of the insights she gleaned from an interactive prayer service she and her teacher and classmates helped lead at Immaculate Conception School in Loose Creek.

The purpose was to put the school’s 114 students in a prayerful and purposeful frame of mind ahead of Lent, so they could observe the season well.

“We give things up because that’s what Jesus did when He was in the desert,” said sixth-grader Emma Stuecken.

“He did that for us,” she added.

Their teacher, Megan Markway, set out in early February to help her students approach Lent more intentionally this year by planning ahead.

During religion class one morning, she gathered them into prayer and began a gentle line of inquiry.

She asked why Lent is 40 days long.

Hands went up, and students told her about the time Jesus spent in the desert, fasting and fending-off temptation before entering His public ministry.

She asked what three things Catholics are called to pay special attention to throughout the days leading up to Easter.

Some told her about praying more.

Others talked about giving things up, such as food they like to eat, and cutting back on things they like to do.

Some spoke of the CRS Rice Bowl on their kitchen tables and of giving money to the poor.

Mrs. Markway taught them the word “almsgiving” and explained its biblical connection to praying and fasting.

“We matched their ideas with the words the Church uses to talk about them,” she said.

Based on what she and her students shared with each other that morning, Mrs. Markway helped them prepare a pre-Lenten prayer service for the whole school.



Megan Markway, sixth-grade teacher at Immaculate Conception School in Loose Creek, observes one of her students reading a prayer during an all-school pre-Lent prayer service on Feb. 8. — Photo from the Immaculate Conception School, Loose Creek Facebook page

All together now

The morning of Feb. 8, the entire student body gathered in the school cafeteria.

Again, they prayed.

Again, Mrs. Markway asked questions.

Students young and old put their hands up to answer.

The sixth-graders held up signs to help Mrs. Markway illustrate words and concepts related to having a fruitful Lent.

“The kids in the primary grades gave answers like ‘prayer’ or ‘spending time with Jesus,’” she noted. “‘Almsgiving’ is the word that always trips them up. We had to teach them about the purpose of alms.”

She spoke of the need to be specific about their personal Lenten fasts and resolutions.

“Whatever you pick, you need to find a way for it to bring you closer to God,” she said.

She suggested giving up something that’s hard to let go of, “and whenever it gets really difficult for you, that’s when you bring God into it.”

“Ask Him to give you the strength you need for whenever you’re having a hard time,” she said.

They watched a short video of popular Catholic evangelizer Father Michael Schmitz, director of youth and young-adult ministry from the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota.

The priest encouraged them to tell people who are close to them what they’re giving up for Lent, so they can help and encourage each other.

“He said to let those around you help you stay accountable and stay closer to God,” said Mrs. Markway. “We can be there to help each other. And maybe somebody will get some inspiration from your idea.”

Nearer to Thee

Lilly held up a sign that said “Almsgiving” during the prayer service.

A message that stuck with

her is that giving something up out of love helps people get closer to God.

“I would like to be closer to Him,” she said.

She learned that from a prayer standpoint, setting aside just 15 minutes a day for prayer can make a big difference.

The avenues for sacrifice are wide and plentiful.

“You can give up something other than food,” she said. “You can give up TV or something like that.”

Emma helped read the petitions during the prayer service.

She learned about the importance of being intentional about her Lenten practices.

For instance, she hopes that if she spends less time on her phone during Lent, she’ll continue spending time on more important things after Lent is over.

She encouraged people her age to listen to what their teachers tell them about Lent and the practice of their faith.

“They know what they’re talking about,” she said.

Now and forever

Principal Anne Luebbert plans to give frequent reminders about Lenten practices and sacrifices throughout the season, so the students don’t lose track or forget.

Mrs. Markway said she hopes the students understand how powerful a sacrifice for God can be for getting closer to Him.

It’s something they can focus on during Lent and hopefully will continue throughout the year, she said.



Bishop McKnight’s Calendar

The following appointments are tentative, depending on the pandemic.

FEBRUARY

- Feb. 19** Missouri Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee, 10 am, Virtual
- Feb. 21** Rite of Election, 3 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph, Jefferson City
- Feb. 23** Personnel Board Meeting, 2 pm, Virtual
- Feb. 24-26** Holy Trinity Seminary, Dallas, Texas
- Feb. 28** Confirmation Mass, St. Joseph Parish, Westphalia and St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Folk, 10 am, St. Joseph Church, Westphalia
- Mar. 3** Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri Board Meeting, noon, Virtual
- Mar. 4** Catholic Rural Life Board Meeting, 2 pm, Virtual
- Mar. 6** Early Adopter Cohort Meeting, 10 am, Helias Catholic High School, Jefferson City; Mass, 5:30 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph, Jefferson City
- Mar. 7** Confirmation Ceremony, St. Lawrence Parish, St. Elizabeth and St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Iberia, 2 pm, St. Lawrence Church, St. Elizabeth
- Mar. 9** Confirmation Ceremony, St. Mary Parish, Glasgow and St. Joseph Parish, Slater, 6:30 pm, St. Mary Church, Glasgow

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Bishop McKnight’s February prayer intention for our Local Church

For parents: may they have the spiritual and material resources they need to provide their children a home in which charity and mercy are practiced, and knowledge of our faith is shared.

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

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

Por los padres de familia: para que tengan los recursos espirituales y materiales que necesitan para brindarles a sus hijos un hogar en el que se practiquen la caridad y la misericordia, y en el que se comparta el conocimiento de nuestra fe.

Fr. Cordes: History points to balance of Lenten penance, renewal

By Jay Nies

The Church's observance of Lent has shifted and evolved through the ages, bringing the complimentary themes of penance and renewal into balance.

But the biblical pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving have never faded.

"Yes, it's a season of penance and increased solemnity, but there's also a sense of joy because there is genuine renewal happening within us," said Father Christopher Cordes, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Columbia.

Fr. Cordes spoke online over Zoom Feb. 10 as part of Columbia Knights of Columbus Council 1529's Adult Education and Devotion (AED) series.

His topic was "Preparing for Lent."

He drew inspiration from Adolf Adam's richly researched volume, *The Liturgical Year: Its History and Its Meaning After the Reform of the Liturgy*.

Fr. Cordes said it's helpful to view Lent in the context of the entire Church year.

Both Advent and Lent are seasons of preparation, "taking time to prepare ourselves day-by-day in an intentional way to celebrate some of the great mysteries that define our faith," he said.

The 40 days of Lent are meant to help make the faithful more receptive to the grace

of the Easter Triduum — the most solemn three days of the liturgical year — and the 50 days of Easter that follow.

"Penance and self-sacrifice are certainly important, but it's about more than that," Fr. Cordes stated. "It's also about being more open to listening to the Word of God, growing in prayer, growing in acts of sacrifice and reaching out to help other people."

The season's distinctive character comes from two early Church influences: the days of fasting leading up to the commemoration of Jesus's passion and death, and the final weeks of preparation for those who were to be baptized at Easter.

In those days, people seeking to be restored into the faith community after committing serious sins, especially sins against God and His Church, undertook a lengthy and demanding period of public penance.

"It involved the wearing of a penitential garment and ashes," Fr. Cordes noted. "Everyone knew you were in this category throughout this extended time of being reunited with the Church."

There was also the final phase of the catechumenate for people seeking baptism at the Easter Vigil.

"This came to be known as a time for all the baptized to prepare to renew their own baptism," said Fr. Cordes.

Forty days

He said the earliest known reference to Lent as it's currently known is from the second century, when Christians prepared for Easter with a two-day grief-inspired fast.

"It was with a sense of sadness about the necessary death of Jesus that led to our salvation and allowed Him to

and to be ready to live a more faithful life," said Fr. Cordes.

They also realized that cutting back on food and drink allows them to give more to people in need.

"So it's also a witness to your faith: giving up something so others who have nothing can have something," he stated.

The Church refrains from praying the "Gloria" at Mass and replaces the "Alleluia" before the Gospel with an acclamation of Jesus's Lordship.

The readings and prayers at Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours throughout Lent focus on penance, preparation and spiritual renewal.

The three-year cycle of Sunday readings for the season include Jesus facing down temptation in the desert, His transfiguration and revelation to His Apostles that He would have to suffer and die, and various accounts of Jesus changing people's lives physically and spiritually when they encounter Him.



RETURN TO ME WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART

— CNS illustration/CrisAnne Fernandez

rise from the dead," said Fr. Cordes.

By the third century, that period of fasting had extended to the entire week leading up to Easter.

By 325, the Church Fathers taking part in the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea spoke of the 40 days of preparation for Easter.

The number 40 is a powerful symbol that resonates throughout Scripture.

It echoes the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert, praying and enduring temptation after His baptism in the River Jordan.

It also points to the 40 days of flooding in the time of Noah, the 40 years the people of Israel spent in the wilderness before entering the Promised Land, the 40 days Moses spent on Mount Sinai, and Elijah's 40-day fast on the way to Mount Horeb.

Sundays, on which Jesus's resurrection is celebrated every week, were not included in the Church's days of fasting.

Abstaining from food as an aid to prayer and repentance was well known to the Jewish people in the Old Testament, while several other cultures practiced fasting in pursuit of better health.

"Christians came to understand fasting as way to prepare for the struggle with evil

Sadness and joy

Fr. Cordes talked about how the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s worked to restore the balance of Lent.

Their ideal is encapsulated in one of the prayers for Mass on the season's First Sunday: "Each year, You give us this joyful season when we prepare to celebrate the Paschal Mystery with mind and heart renewed. You give us a spirit of loving reverence for You, our Father, and of willing service to our neighbor. As we recall the great events that gave us new life in Christ, You bring the image of Your Son to perfection within us."

"That really gives us a sense of what Lent fundamentally is all about and what's supposed to be happening throughout our preparation," said Fr. Cordes.

"It's a joyful season, a time of renewal, a time to become more like Christ, to reflect His image and let it shine through us," he said.

It does include the penitential practice of fasting and the giving-up of things.

"But the purpose is to allow that renewal to happen within us," he said.

Catholics take on the communal sacrifice of fasting on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday and of abstaining from meat on all Fridays of Lent.

Battling sin

Fr. Cordes noted that in addition to the communal penitential practices, Catholics are encouraged to increase their individual regimen of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

He suggested giving something up while also taking on a positive practice.

"Maybe daily prayers in a Lenten booklet or online devotional," he said. "Maybe reading the daily Scriptures or going to weekday Mass or praying the Stations of the Cross."

"It's also helpful to give up something you enjoy, to remind you of Jesus's sacrifice and our call to live a life of sacrificial love," he stated.


Fr. Cordes pointed out that sacrificial almsgiving is a year-round activity, but it receives greater emphasis during Lent.

He suggested that each person consider an area of sin in their life that needs to be addressed, and resolve to work on it with God's help throughout Lent.

It's also good to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a means of "opening yourself up to God's grace and move forward in a more faithful way," he said.

He cautioned against taking on too much this Lent or not taking on enough.

He closed with a prayer that this year's Lenten practices will be meaningful ways of drawing closer to God and bringing His light and love into to the world.

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Fr. William Peckman helped create new 40-day devotional on spiritual warfare

More than 12,000 copies sold since Jan. 27

Portions of the following are from an article in the July 24, 2020, issue of *The Catholic Missourian*:

By Jay Nies

Father William Peckman wrote one-third of a new Catholic devotional book on rooting out evil, one day at a time.

It's called *Let Freedom Ring: 40 Days for Freedom from the Devil*.

It's a collection of daily meditations Fr. Peckman and two other priests wrote for usgraceforce.com last summer.

It's about spiritual warfare and conquering temptation.

"This is in many ways a long and detailed examination of conscience," Fr. Peckman, pastor of Ss. Peter & Paul Parish in Boonville, recently wrote to his parishioners.

More than 12,000 copies of the book were sold online in less than three weeks.

Fr. Peckman noted that the way to kill a tree is to target its roots, rather than its fruit.

"We waste a lot of time forming circular firing squads when we need to aim and fire at our own personal demons who drag us into sin," he stated.

He pointed out to *The Catholic Missourian* last summer that Jesus didn't just complain about what was going on around Him, He did something about it.

"He directly fought the devil!" the priest stated. "He acknowledged and did battle with the demonic forces that ceaselessly try to influence our behavior."

Breaking the chains

The idea for the online program that became *Let Freedom Ring* came together in less than a week.

Fr. Peckman was near the end of a weeklong private re-

treat when he saw an online post from Father Richard Heilman of the Diocese of Madison, Wisconsin, who was thinking about doing something to promote devotion.

halt within our families, our parishes, our Church and society, and dealing with them head-on."

Fr. Heilman called on Father James Altman of the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin, to help with the daily reflections.

Their goal was to use the ancient, time-honored Christian tools of prayer, reflection and reparation to "purge the demonic from our families, parishes, diocese and country, so that there may be an explosion of faith and charity in our Church at all levels," said Fr. Peckman.

Each day of the program would include a reflection on a particular sin that prevents people from reaching the full potential of their relationship with God.

There would also be prayers and actions of mercy and reparation, along with a solid regimen of fasting and physical exercise.

Fr. Peckman agreed to write 16 of the chapters, which included topics such as "Freedom from Fear," "Freedom from Predation," "Freedom from Envy," "Freedom from Belligerence," "Freedom from Pornography" and "Freedom from Godlessness."

"We're talking about personal freedom and engaging in prayer in order to overcome temptations and learn new virtues," he told *The Catholic Missourian* at that time.

"We must arm ourselves with prayer and the sacraments," he said. "That is what 'Let Freedom Ring' is designed to do."

Fears relieved

The authors announced on July 4 that the series would start on July 7 and continue through Aug. 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

An estimated 75,000 people partook of the online offerings each day.

Because not everyone could

participate at the same level of intensity, each day's entry included:

- a "white level" for people who are pregnant, elderly or have serious medical conditions;

- a "red level" for people who don't believe they're ready for full engagement;

- a "blue level" for people who are healthy and ready to be fully engaged in the program; and

- a "black level" specifically for priests.

The basic prayer regimen was the same for all levels. The differences between red, white and blue involved the intensity of fasting and other reparation activities.

The black level also included more time for prayer.

Fr. Peckman noted that there are as many temptations and impediments to grace as there are people.

"Not everyone has the same problems," he said. "But the devil knows exactly where to hit."

The project helped make Fr. Peckman aware of his own flashpoints and of God's power to heal them and give him

strength.

It made the priest feel more human, more powerful, more Catholic.

"A week into this, I could already see a difference," he said. "I'm not afraid anymore. I'm not intimidated. The temptations I struggle with are evaporating."

"My hope for the long run is that this becomes a way of life," he stated.

Phenomenal reception

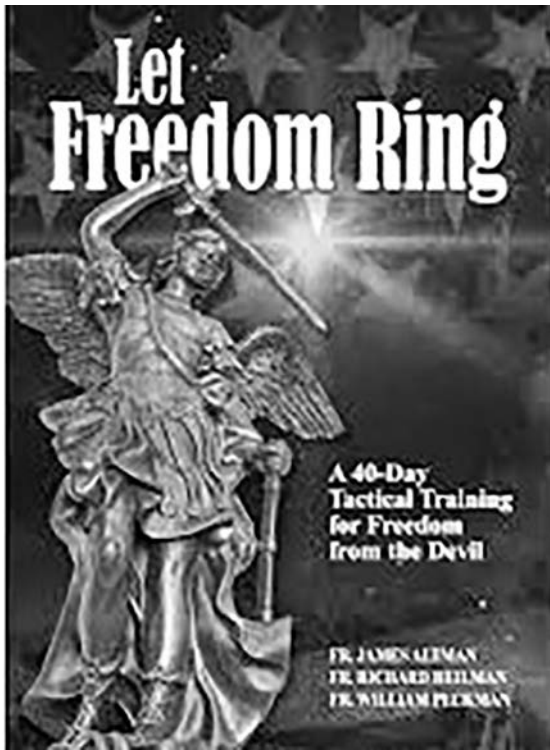
"40 Days to Freedom" turned out to be so transformational and impactful that the three priests decided to compile the daily meditations into a book to reach more people.

"As 'children of light,' we are called to put on the armor of God so that we may stand firm against the tactics of the devil," Fr. Heilman stated, citing Ephesians 6:11. "The tools in this book give us our weapons back and enable us to fight the darkness."

The first run of 2,400 copies sold out in less than two days.

"We ordered 3,000 more books in time for Lent," said

See FREEDOM, page 23



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In Iraq, pope hopes to encourage Christians, build bridges

By Dale Gavlak
Catholic News Service

Amman, Jordan

On his historic visit to Iraq in March, Pope Francis hopes to encourage his Christian flock, badly bruised by sectarian conflict and brutal Islamic State attacks, while building further bridges to Muslims by extending fraternal peace.

The trip's papal logo reflects this, depicting Pope Francis with Iraq's notable Tigris and Euphrates rivers, a palm tree and a dove carrying an olive branch over the Vatican and Iraqi flags. The motto: "You are all brothers," is written in Ara-

bic, Chaldean and Kurdish languages.

The first-ever papal visit to the biblical land of Iraq March 5-8 is significant. For years, the pope has expressed his concerns publicly for the plight and persecution of Iraq's Christians and its mosaic of many religious minorities, including the Yazidis, who have suffered at the hands of Islamic State militants and have been caught in the crosshairs of Sunni and Shi'ite Muslim violence.

Tensions persist between Iraq's majority Shi'ite and minority Sunni Muslim communities, with the latter now feeling disenfranchised following the

2003 downfall of Saddam Hussein, a Sunni Muslim who marginalized Shi'ites for 24 years under his minority rule.

"I am the pastor of people who are suffering," Pope Francis told Catholic News Service at the Vatican ahead of his visit.

Earlier, the pope said he hoped Iraq could "face the future through the peaceful and shared pursuit of the common good on the part of all elements of society, including the religious, and not fall back into hostilities sparked by the simmering conflicts of the regional powers."

"The pope will come to say, 'Enough,

enough war, enough violence; seek peace and fraternity and the safeguarding of human dignity,'" said Cardinal Louis Sako, the Baghdad-based patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church. The cardinal reportedly has worked for several years to see the pope's trip to Iraq come to fruition.

Pope Francis "will bring us two things: comfort and hope, which have been denied to us until now," the cardinal said.

The majority of Iraq's Christians belong to the Chaldean Catholic Church.

See IRAQ, page 19

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Dominican Fr. Joseph Paul Albin has ties to Mexico, Columbia

Attended St. Brendan School and while in college was active at the St. Thomas More Newman Center

By Jay Nies

Discerning a vocation is seldom straightforward and often begins long before the discerners are aware of it.

"There's not some perfect magic plan God has laid out for us," said Dominican Father Joseph Paul Albin, a campus minister at the University of Dallas in Irving, Texas. "He's always revising the plan with each of our steps. So right now, you may be someplace where it isn't God's will for you to be, but you can still do God's will while you're there."

Fr. Albin, ordained this past July, described his own path to the Priesthood and the Order of Preachers as "circuitous."

He grew up in Mexico, Missouri, and attended St. Brendan School. He later became active in campus ministry at the St. Thomas More Newman Center in Columbia while studying at the University of Missouri.

"I have very faithful Catholic parents," he said. "They did a really good job of showing my brothers and me not just proper religious practice but how the faith is lived."

A big part of that was the sacrificial love they showed to each other, he said.

He remembers his family going to Mass on Christmas Eve each year, then returning early the next morning to help cook meals for the homebound.

"My parents wanted us to see Christmas as a day of service," he recalled. "While the Incarnation was a great cause for celebration, they believed that celebration should immediately lead to service to others."

"Do something!"

When Fr. Albin recently contacted his grade school principal, Sister Ruth Ann Klausner of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, he didn't know if she'd remember him.

She said, "Oh, I certainly remember you!"

"Very truthfully, I was a troublemaker," he recalled.

He found greater focus in high school, singing in the honors choir and performing in a couple of school productions.

"I think I saw those as talents that I could use for good," he said.

Once while on a high-school retreat, he opened himself just a bit to the possibility that Jesus loves him enough to have died just for Him.

"I don't know if I believed it fully at that movement," he said. "But that's the first time I can remember having an inkling that Jesus would love just me if I were the only one."

Lingering doubts and feelings of unworthiness followed him to the University of Missouri, where he majored in religious studies.

Angelle Hall, the campus minister at the Newman Center, recognized great potential in him.

"She called a lot of gifts out of me that I didn't know were there," he recalled. "She helped me see that there were ways that I could lead in the community."

"But I just couldn't believe



Dominican Father Joseph Paul Albin greets his parents after celebrating his Mass of Thanksgiving the day after his priestly ordination.

that I could be called to the Priesthood," he said.

After graduating, he moved to New Orleans to pursue a master's degree in pastoral studies with emphasis on pastoral counseling at Loyola University.

He also served as a campus minister there, primarily working with retreats and small

faith-sharing groups.

"I absolutely loved it," he said.

He routinely rhapsodized about the beauty of religious life until one of his friends called his bluff.

"It was one of those kick-

in-the-pants moments," he recalled. "He basically said, 'I'm tired of hearing about it. If you love it so much, are you gonna' do something about it, or are you gonna' just wait around forever?'"

That's when Fr. Albin realized that he "wasn't fully convinced that it's not for me."

Namely, "I didn't want to get to 50 or 60 and say, 'Man, I wish I had tried that,'" he said.

He knew and admired several Dominican priests from his time in Columbia.

The thought of living in a community that gathered several times a day for prayer appealed to him.

He also liked the idea of ministering among the people and helping bring the Good News to life for them through preaching and teaching.

See FR. ALBIN, page 15

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QUESTION CORNER

Christ 'descended into hell' / Holy Family: Egypt or Nazareth?

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service



Q. What does it mean when we say in the Apostles' Creed that Jesus "descended into hell"? That statement is not used in the Nicene Creed, which we often say at Mass. It bothers me so much that when I say the Rosary, I substitute "limbo" for "hell." (Charlottesville, Virginia)

A. Since Advent in 2011, when the third edition of the *Roman Missal* was put into use in the United States, parishes have had the option at Sunday Mass of using the Nicene Creed or the (shorter) Apostles' Creed. I am not surprised that the words in the Apostles' Creed about Christ's descent into hell bother you, because the common understanding of Catholics has been that the word "hell" denotes the permanent abode of the devil and the damned, a place of eternal punishment from which there is no escape.

I'm not sure, though, that you'd want to substitute "limbo," since limbo has a different meaning, has never been a fixed article of belief in the Church and is, I would say, even more questionable today. (In years past, it was thought by most Catholics that children who died without being baptized went, not to be with God in heaven, but to a state of natural happiness called limbo. But in 2007, with the approval of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, the Church's International Theological Commission concluded that "there are theological and liturgical reasons to hope that infants who die without baptism may be saved.")

As to the phrase "descended into hell," it may help to know that, in early Christian times, the Hebrew word for hell (*Sheol*) was ambiguous; it could mean the place of the damned, but it was also used to include the place where the righteous awaited redemption.

Until Jesus had completed His death and resurrection, the just could not yet know the joy of being in God's presence. So when the Apostles' Creed says that Jesus "descended into hell," it means that He went to rescue the just who had already died, to take them with Him to heaven.

Q. We read several accounts of the birth of Christ during Masses after Christmas. In reading Luke 2:39-40 and Matthew 2:13-15, it appears that there is a difference as to what happened after Jesus was born. My question is this: Did the Holy Family flee to Egypt or did they return to Nazareth? (Indianapolis)

A. My answer would be that both things happened: Following the birth of the Christ Child and the visit of the Magi, the Holy Family fled to Egypt to avoid Herod's persecution and then they eventually returned to Nazareth, which was their family's home.

Attempts to find a contradiction in Luke's and Matthew's infancy accounts are based on a false understanding of the Gospels. None of the evangelists claimed to have written an exhaustive chronological account of every event in the life of Christ; they wrote for different audiences (Jewish Christians and gentile Christians) and highlighted different things.

My own view of the sequence of events — and this seems to harmonize the Gospel accounts of both Matthew and Luke — is that Jesus was presented in the Temple a few weeks after His birth; then the Holy Family fled to Egypt and, after the death of Herod, returned to Palestine and settled in Nazareth.

Nowhere does Luke say that they returned to Nazareth "im-

See DOYLE, page 18

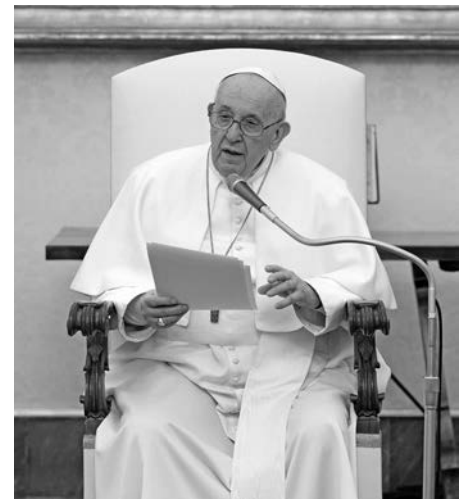
Papal Audience

February 10, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In our continuing catechesis on prayer, we now consider how our prayerful dialogue with God is meant to embrace the events of each day, in our homes, daily chores or work. All our thoughts and activities should be a part of our daily conversation with the Lord. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that "it is in the present that we encounter God, not yesterday or tomorrow, but today" (No. 2659). There is no aspect of our everyday lives, however mundane, that cannot be offered in prayer to God and become an occasion of deeper union with Him. As we come to know Christ more intimately in prayer, our hearts are expanded to embrace in love and solidarity all those around us, above all the poor, the unhappy and those in need. Blaise Pascal once observed that human beings are so frail that even a drop of water can destroy us (cf. *Thoughts*, No. 347). Yet in our fragility, prayer is a mark of our supreme grandeur, for prayer can work miracles in our world, transform lives and history, and serve the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace.

I cordially greet the English-speaking faithful. I invite everyone, especially in this time of pandemic, to draw nearer to the Lord in prayer each day, bringing to Him our own needs and the needs of the world around us. Upon you and your families I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!



Tolton Catholic High School board expanded to include lay leadership

Successfully fulfilling a goal that was outlined in Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School's recently published VISION 2020 Strategic Plan, Bishop W. Shawn McKnight has announced the expansion of the school's board of directors to include lay membership.

Previously, the board was composed of four appointed clerical members, with the school's president/principal serving in an ex-officio capacity.

Underscoring the critical importance of laity and clerical co-responsibility for the future growth of the school, Bishop McKnight has appointed Michael Kelly and Dr. Julie Stansfield as new voting members within this expanded governing body.

The appointments became effective Feb. 1.

•Mr. Kelly has been a leader in the Columbia business community for over 35 years, with experience in real estate, construction and banking.

Raised in Edina, he earned a degree in finance from the University of Missouri's Trulaske College of Business.

He and wife Cheryl have been married for 34 years. They raised three children and now cherish their seven grand-



Michael Kelly



Dr. Julie Stansfield

children, one of whom is soon to be born.

Mr. Kelly has lent his talents to various non-profit boards throughout his professional career and continues to serve as the director of the Jefferson City Real Estate Corporation.

He is an active member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Columbia and serves in a number of leadership roles at the diocesan level; he is a member of the Finance Council, a trustee of the Jefferson City Catholic Diocese Fund, and, with wife Cheryl, an area councillor for the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

He enjoys lake time with his family, travelling and continued learning as an avid reader.

•Dr. Stansfield is a Columbia physician with specialty training in internal medicine.

She is currently employed at the Harry S. Truman VA Hospital in Columbia, where she has patient responsibilities in both the inpatient and outpatient areas. She also has teaching responsibilities for physicians seeking training in the internal medicine field.

She and husband John attended St. Pius X Catholic High School in Festus together and have been happily married for 35 years. They are long-time members of Sacred Heart Parish.

In addition to her involvement with Vitae Foundation, she is a proud member of Boy

See BOARD, page 19

This Lent, remember you were made for greatness

By Mary Marrocco

Catholic News Service

Remember the old fairy tales? They are told, or retold, by great storytellers like the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen and my favorite, Andrew Lang — who, back in the 19th century, gathered stories from around the world into *The Red Fairy Book*, *The Green Fairy Book* and plenty of other colors.

Perhaps one reason I liked them is that it was nearly always the youngest of three sisters, or three brothers, who did best when they went out to seek their fortunes. As the youngest of three sisters, I felt the satisfaction for us little ones.

But the point of those folk stories was not about sibling order. It was that it takes us more than one try to learn what we really need to learn. We have to set out over and over again, to the third try or the 33rd.

That's because we need not only "head" learning but the kind of real inner change that comes as we work through adversity and discover what's inside us. We also become better able to receive things from others: The third sibling is given gifts the others aren't offered or refuse.

With the end in mind

By Jay Nies

It always intrigues and challenges me to hear life coaches talk about the importance of "beginning with the end in mind."



St. Benedict of Nursia certainly had the end in mind over 1,500 years ago when he advised the men and women of his religious order to

"keep death daily before your eyes."

Back in 1954, my great-aunt gave me my grandmother, Virginia, a little, leather-bound book of prayers, long and short.

My grandmother wore that book out — especially a daily prayer of supplication to Jesus's mother, based on her walk with Him through His Incarnation, passion, death, resurrection and ascension into eternal glory.

"He refuses you nothing," the supplicant reminds Our Lady, "because you ask nothing contrary to His honor."

My grandmother prayed that prayer almost every day for nearly 65 years.

One night, I photocopied it and asked her to pray it aloud with me, antiphonally, like monks or sisters in a monastery.

I prayed one sentence, and she answered with the next, then I followed,

Perhaps you're an old hand at Christianity and have been through many Lents; perhaps you're approaching your first; or somewhere in between. All of us are plunging once again into the hunger and desolation of the desert with Jesus, and we're going to be tempted with Him. This year, the world's second COVID-19 Lent, our desolation and thirst may be more palpable.

Like the third sister or brother in the fairy tales, we've already been tested and tried, and will have to dig deep to find our real resources. When Jesus was offered bread by Satan, He wasn't coming off a four-course banquet, producing the answer He'd carefully prepared for an exam. No, it was visceral. He was famished, exhausted and alone.

We may find as we get further into the journey, wearier and more tested, we are able to find more inside us than we knew we had. "The world offers you comfort," says Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, "but we were made for greatness."

When we've become less comfortable and have spent much, thinking our stores are empty or fearing having nothing in reserve, we have to go into inner chambers of our treasure house and draw out something else entirely. That's

and so forth.

When we were finished, she said, "It's so much more meaningful that way!"

She never stopped making time each day for that prayer, even as she got older and her health continued to decline.

When her eyesight got to where she could no longer read it, my mom or one of us grandchildren would read her prayer out loud for her.

About two years ago, on the morning of the day she left this life, I stood beside her bed and read that prayer she had offered up so many hundreds of times herself.

She whispered along, knowing whole sections by heart.

Near the end of the prayer are the words: "During my last moments on earth, grant me strong and sincere repentance. May my sorrow be accompanied by a lively and attentive presence of mind that will enable me to worthily receive the last sacraments of the Church and die in Your friendship and favor."

That evening, God heard her prayer and granted her deepest desire.

I unite my prayers with Our Lady for Him to do the same for me and for you and for everyone who comes after us.

Until then, we should be on the lookout for subtle reminders to "keep death daily before your eyes."

when we can start to get somewhere.

At this poignant moment in our collective journey, Pope Francis asks us a simple question: "What time is it?" His encyclical *"Fratelli Tutti*, on Fraternity and Social Friendship" wrestles with this question. Only a prophet knows what time it is, says Abraham Heschel.

But Pope Francis doesn't just answer the question for us. He wants to hear from us, too: What time is it? We need to reach inside, speak and hear our responses. Each answer is needed because we need to discover not only what's within us but also what's among us.

Pope Francis offers assistance in delving into our spirits, minds and experiences to formulate our responses. Many people have told me they participate in reflection groups to read his text and take it further in shared discussions.

He tells us it's a time of ecstasy, which might seem surprising at first blush. Etymologically, *"ekstasis"* means the mysterious and wonderful condi-

tion of springing out of oneself to reach out toward the other.

Think of the child toddling on unsteady but eager feet toward her radiant parent. Or the young man bursting to share with the world a new and exciting discovery.

It's a time, not to stay hunkered down inside ourselves, but to emerge from within like Old Faithful gushing forth water from the earth to reach high into the sky. For us it might not be a physical going forth, but it's real nonetheless. How can our spirits go out — perhaps to someone quite different from us or even hostile to what we think and want?

Pope Francis encourages us to go out, not to the known and friendly but to the unknown and not-so-friendly, the "abyss" where the "barbarians" live, according to our perceptions. The unknown and unfriendly might be right

See MARROCCO, page 18

REFLECTION

True colors

By Mark Saucier

After enduring pandemic, politics and a polar vortex, everyone could do with a rainbow, and we get it in Sunday's first reading from Genesis.

God set a bow across the sky as a reminder of covenant and a sign of hope.

Most who have heard of Noah and the Flood remember that, but there is more to the story than a zoological cruise ship and a colorful crescent.

Look at the language: "Be fertile then, and multiply: abound on earth and subdue it."

Sound familiar? It echoes the Creation story in the first chapter of Genesis. The story of Noah is basically a reset, God saying, "Let's try this again, shall we?"

But that is not new, either. At the beginning of the book, there is the creation, the fall and a reset.

The same might be said about what happens after Cain kills his brother Abel. But each time, it is more than a do over. The story is meant to teach something about God and about us.

The stories of the early chapters of Genesis are about what it means to be made in the image of God, particularly what it means to be a responsible person.

When confronted with noshing on the forbidden fruit, Adam pointed to the woman, while Eve nodded at the serpent.

They refused to take personal responsibility.

Questioned by God about his brother, Cain doesn't deny what he has done. Rather, his reply is, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

He took no moral responsibility for his action.

When it comes to Noah, the picture was broadened. Noah acted to save humankind and all mortal beings.

It was a lesson of collective responsibility — an obligation to the welfare of others, the sanctity of life and the future of creation.

Noah is no full-time hero. In the following chapter, he gets drunk and condemns his son and his descendants to slavery.

Cain was a murderer. Adam and Eve were disobedient.

God recognized this, vowing never to destroy the earth because of man. However, acknowledging that "the desires of man's heart are evil," there is the intimation that man may.

Essentially, that rainbow says, "I promise not to lay waste to life again, but you, in your free will and selfish desires, are quite capable of doing this. You can avoid this through responsibility, but responsibility depends on relationships — you with Me, and you with the world."

A sign of hope? That's up to us.

Catholic schools honor distinguished graduates

Each year during Catholic Schools Week, Catholic schools throughout the United States bestow a Distinguished Graduate Award honoring members of their alumni who have made a contribution to American life and/or the Catholic Church.

Recipients are active members in their parish and share their time and talent for the betterment of the parish or school.

Here are some of the honorees from the Jefferson City diocese:

JEFFERSON CITY: St. Joseph Cathedral School honored Max and Susan Rademan, members of the Class of 1997.

Mr. Rademan is the manager of interventional services at SSM St. Mary's Hospital—Jefferson City. Mrs. Rademan is a physical therapist at River City Living Community in Jefferson City.

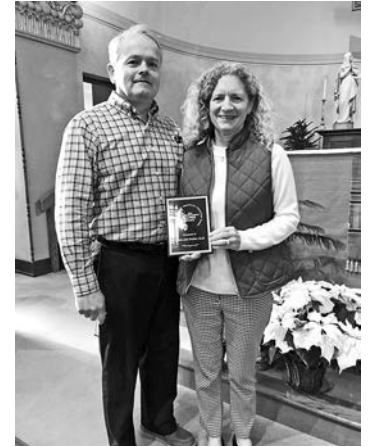
"We are caring for others, as the Lord has cared for us," they stated.

Their children are third-generation St. Joseph Cathedral School students.

Principal Spencer Allen praised the Rademans' commitment to the school and the larger community.

"In addition to their work as heroes caring for others on the front line during the challenging last several months, Max and Susan are active in their parish and school, such as by volunteering for the Christmas bazaar and in the school, sharing also the gift of their three children," he said.

Mr. and Mrs. Rademan are convinced that Catholic schools are important. "We feel a Catholic education created a Christ-centered model to help our children mature into Christ-like people and to recognize Christ in themselves and others," they stated. "As parents, we are our children's first teachers. Attending a Catholic school that supports our faith is an extension of our home and allows us to have an active role in their education. Catholic schools have high expectations of their students academically and spiritually. Students are expected to take responsibility for their actions



FROM LEFT: Susan and Max Rademan and their children, St. Joseph Cathedral School, Jefferson City; Carol Lankford, St. Brendan School, Mexico; Beth Wulff, Visitation Inter-Parish School, Vienna (with Deacon Michael Brooks and Father Basil Tigga); Kevin and Debbie Kolb, Immaculate Conception School, Jefferson City.

and how they treat others."

Catholic schools also teach the value of community involvement, they stated.

JEFFERSON CITY: Immaculate Conception School honored Kevin and Debbie Kolb for the countless hours they've given in support of the parish and school.

Mr. Kolb graduated from the school in 1977, and Mrs. Kolb is considered an "honorary alumna."



Karen Gentges, St. Joseph Westphalia.

"I cannot begin to estimate the time and effort that they have given back and with complete humbleness," stated Principal Heather Schrimpf.

"Whether it's serving on the school advisory board, parish council, the I.C. Home and School Association, various other parish organizations, volunteering to tutor students after school, or helping to substitute in the classroom, their love for Catholic education and the Catholic faith is evident," Mrs. Schrimpf said.

LINN: St. George School honored Elizabeth Hoffman Reinkemeyer, a member of the Class of 2000.

She has been serving as second-grade teacher at St. George since graduating from college.

"Liz's dedication to Catholic education is reflected in her commitment to passing our Catholic faith down to all children," said Principal Lisa Grellner. "Liz has a love for the sacraments that she instills in all of her students."

Second grade is a big year for Catholics, as they receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion for the first time.

"Liz never lets her students forget that Jesus Christ is really and truly present in the Eucharist — Body, Blood, and Divinity," Mrs. Grellner stated. "Liz not only teaches the importance of the sacraments, but she models this in her daily life."

All teachers have struggled through shut-downs, virtual learning and other challenges while ensuring their students' continued learning and academic and spiritual growth.

"The people around here can testify that Liz's faith during these times has not only inspired students but adults as well," Mrs. Grellner stated. "This is another example of building the Body of Christ as well as her dedication to St. George students."

Her mother, Veronica Hoffman, received the same award in 2017.

MARSHALL: St. Peter School honored Ashley Allison with its Alumna of the Year award and Al Terhune with the

Friend of St. Peter award.

Mrs. Allison and her husband own a local business and have two children who now attend St. Peter School.

Mrs. Allison is an energetic volunteer. She is dedicated to the Scrip program and goes above and beyond, trying to help offset the costs of running the school.

As an educator herself, she understands the toll the pandemic has taken on teachers and has looked for ways to help the St. Peter faculty.

She mixes faith and service, making herself available to help at any time.

Mr. Terhune is everything St. Peter School could want in a friend. He exemplifies the commitment to service, dropping everything to help whenever he's needed. "His faith is unwavering, and you see it, every time he responds to a situation, ready to manage whatever is necessary," said Principal Mary McCoy. "He holds a special place in each of our hearts and we are so grateful for the way he generously gives of his time."

RICH FOUNTAIN: Sacred Heart School honored JoAnn Rudroff for her selflessness commitment to passing on the Catholic faith to the youth of Sacred Heart Parish.

She has been giving of herself for many years in the Parish School of Religion and in helping candidates prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

SEDALIA: Sacred Heart School honored Mary Kehl, a 1973 Sacred Heart High School alumna who has been an art teacher at the school for 44 years, with its Teacher of

the Year award.

"We just could not be more grateful that she chose Sacred Heart School to devote her professional life to," stated Sacred Heart School President Mark Register.

She said it was always her dream to return to Sacred Heart to teach art, and she did so after graduating from college.

Her siblings and children are also Sacred Heart graduates, and her grandchildren are current students there.

"I have enjoyed my teaching career here, otherwise I wouldn't be here," she said upon receiving the award Feb. 5. "I loved being here as a student, I love teaching here, and I love the kids and the teachers. I mean, it's a big family."

VIENNA: Visitation Inter-parish School honored Beth Wulff, a member of the Class of 1999.

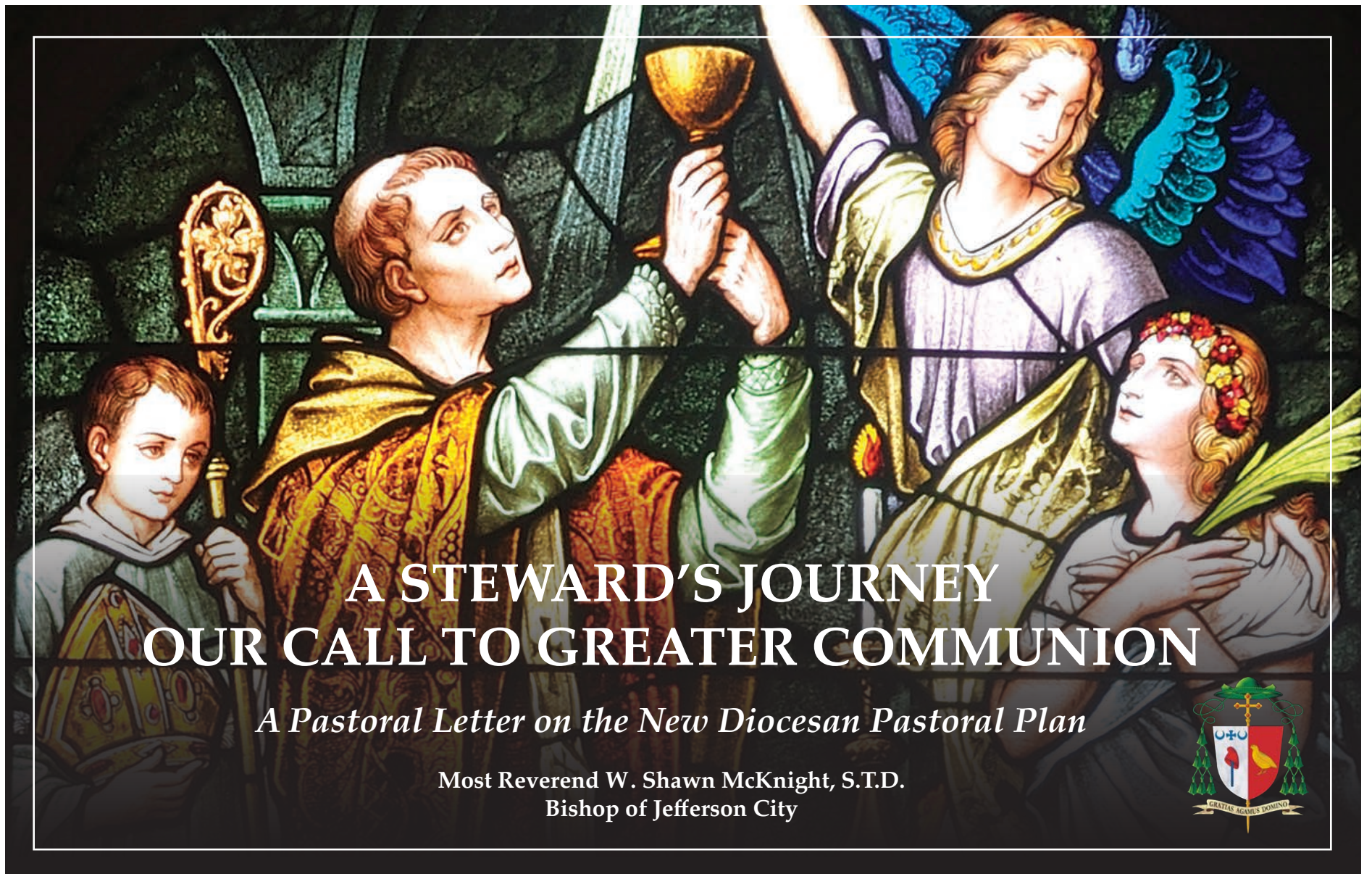
"I look back on the list of past honored graduates and can't help but think that I don't deserve to be grouped with our parish's finest," she stated. "I have spent my whole adult life looking up to those on that list can't believe that I have now been added to it. Thank you all."

WESTPHALIA: St. Joseph School honored Karen (Fenewald) Gentges, a member of the Class of 1982.

"Karen continues to live out her Catholic faith by showing all of us what it means to be a disciple of Christ, giving of herself in service to others," Principal Pat Kirk stated.

Since graduating, Mrs. Gentges has continually dedi-

See GRADUATES, page 18



FEBRUARY 6, 2021

To the laity, members of institutes of consecrated life, and the clergy of the
Diocese of Jefferson City:
Greetings in the name of the Risen Lord.

INTRODUCTION

1. We began this year with a desire for a brighter future. The clergy sexual abuse tragedy, the decline in participation at Mass and in our Church programs, especially by our young adults, the decrease in the number of vocations to the ministerial priesthood, pressures in our rural areas caused by shifting demographics, and the continuing worldwide pandemic tempt us to discouragement and despair. We know something has to change for our local Church to thrive and fulfill its mission.

But I have some good news to share with you:
The Lord has a future full of hope for us (Jeremiah 29:11).

EMMAUS JOURNEY (Luke 24)

2. Luke's Gospel story about the two disciples headed in the wrong direction—away from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus after the crucifixion—shows us how the Good News of Jesus' resurrection has the power to change where we are headed.

We know the name of only one disciple, Cleopas. The other disciple could be a man or woman, young or old. As such, the other nameless disciple could be a placeholder for any one of us.

The two disciples were debating, grappling with how to wrap their minds

around the death of the Lord and what this would mean for them. They were downcast and unable to recognize the Lord when He suddenly joined them on their journey. They relay their belief in Jesus as a prophet of God, mighty in word and in deed, but also their disappointment that, it seemed to them, He didn't turn out to be the savior they were hoping He would be.

3. But Jesus changed their minds. He began by teaching them from the Old Testament Scriptures, showing how it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer in order to enter into his glory. Then Jesus inspired their hearts.

As they approached the village, they beseeched the Lord to stay with them, for it was already evening. Jesus accepted their invitation. While they were at table, He repeated his actions from the Last Supper: He took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He vanished from their sight.

They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?" And they turned themselves around and went back to Jerusalem, testifying to all they experienced, how the Lord was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

4. This fascinating story of the disciples recognizing Jesus in the celebration of the Eucharist, and thereby coming to believe in His resurrection from the dead, inspires us to consider the many ways we may be disheartened, troubled, and confused without the light of the Gospel, the hope of the resurrection, and the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. It is a good reminder of how much we need an intimate relationship with the Lord, and that our best place to encounter Him is in the breaking of the bread in the community of disciples known as the Church.

5. Do you, with me, desire your heart to burn within you? Are you open, like the two disciples in the Emmaus story, to listen to Jesus and to let Him change your mind about things that tempt you to be downcast, confused and troubled?

THE DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN

6. On my third anniversary as your bishop, I so desire that the Lord may enliven our diocese! I desire that the Lord may help all our parishes to be beacons of hope for their parishioners and the wider community, to be communities of faith where we encounter the Lord together in these challenging times. May we come back together, refrain from “going it alone” and heading in the wrong direction. Then, with a stronger communion within each parish and among the parishes, we may fulfill our mission as a local Church!

7. I continue to be grateful for how I was welcomed three years ago, when I was ordained and installed as the Bishop of Jefferson City. As I began to meet many of you, I realized it was going to be necessary for me to listen in an intentional, systematic way to you. I wanted to hear not only the pain, but also the dreams, of the people of our diocese.

Almost immediately, we began listening sessions around the diocese, in English and Spanish, and one solely with young adults. In my attempt to listen deeply to your concerns and hopes for our Church, it became clear that a pastoral plan could be a process to lead us into a better future.

8. At the same time, I was preparing for my first *ad limina* visit to the Holy Father, along with my brother bishops from our region. This afforded us an opportunity for a second set of listening sessions, which focused on the challenges we are facing and how we hope to provide a home of faith for the generations to follow us.

9. Many of us experience the faith first in our homes. All of us bring our faith with us to worship God and support the community in our parish.

The Holy Spirit truly spoke to me when I read Pope Francis’ encyclical, “The Joy of the Gospel” (*Evangelii Gaudium*) on the importance of the parish in our faith lives. In no. 28, Pope Francis describes what a parish is:

“The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community. While certainly not the only institution which evangelizes, if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be ‘the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters.’ This presumes that it really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few. The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a center of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented.”

10. Those sentences echoed what I was hearing from you, and an idea was formed to “review and renew our parishes ... to bring them nearer to people.”

From this encyclical, and from the many voices I had heard throughout the listening process, three fundamental themes for the renewal of our diocese became clear to me: The Spirituality of Stewardship, Co-responsibility, and Parishes as Centers of Charity and Sanctuaries of Mercy.

I did not determine these three themes solely on my own. Along with the clergy and our Diocesan Pastoral Council, I tested these themes.

11. The Diocesan Pastoral Council worked with me to establish a process so we could invite every Catholic’s participation in the development of a new pastoral plan. While keeping ourselves solidly rooted in the teaching of the Catholic Church, especially the conciliar documents of the Second Vatican Council, we also wanted “grassroots” input. Without those deep roots, we knew the plan would not flourish.

12. A year ago, the process was introduced to lay parish leadership in a diocesan-wide meeting at the Cathedral of St. Joseph — one of the last times we gathered in person before the restrictions of the pandemic! In that meeting, we explained the goal of the pastoral planning process, which we titled “Better Together.” By breaking open the Church’s teachings, especially those of the Second Vatican Council and Pope Francis, we encouraged each parish in the diocese to embrace a stewardship spirituality, empower an understanding of the co-responsibility of laity and clergy, and foster personal experiences of charity and mercy in our parishes.

We laid out the timeline for parishes to develop a pastoral plan for themselves, using the same “grassroots/grass tops” methodology. We asked parishes to invite people to participate in a Lenten reflection series on the three themes and to provide their reflections to their pastor and parish councils.

It was also necessary to recognize two groups who are often marginalized in our communities: young people and Spanish-speaking parishioners. We provided opportunities for both groups to consider the three themes and provide their reflections.

13. Together, then, the pastor and council members of almost all our parishes — 70 — developed a parish pastoral plan. The plans were sent to the Chancery, not for approval, but for me and other diocesan leaders and collaborators to understand the scope of what parishes were doing to strengthen their spirituality of stewardship, their ability to exercise the Church’s teaching on co-responsibility, and their capacity as centers of charity and sanctuaries of mercy.

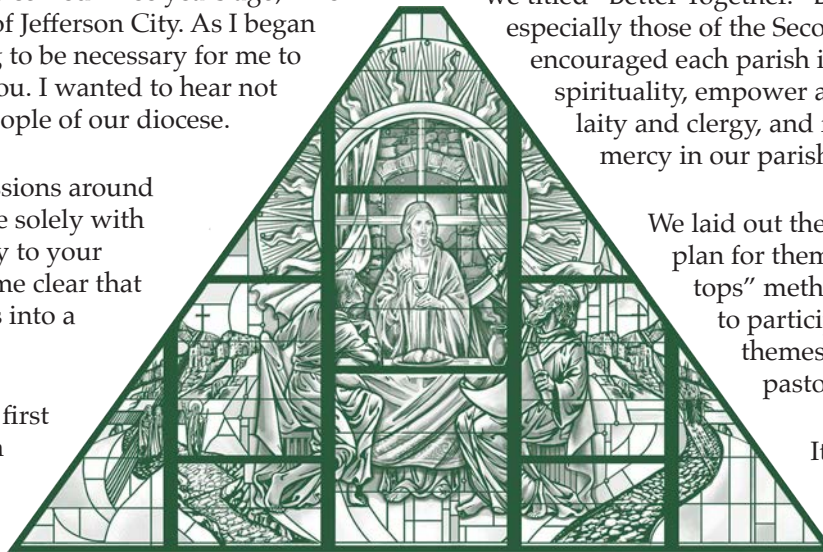
The Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Presbyteral Council reviewed the parish plans, and then a first draft of the diocesan pastoral plan was proposed. This draft went through several revisions, as we sought reactions from parish lay leadership and clergy.

14. Our diocesan pastoral plan leverages our diocesan resources to assist parishes in the achievement of their parish pastoral plans. It is simple, fitting on one 8.5” x 11” page, yet it provides a three-year plan with activities to implement the three priorities in a strategic manner. This intends that diocesan resources are providing optimal support to parishes in the implementation of their own plans.

Serving as a catalyst for the parishes, the diocesan pastoral plan focuses on three objectives:

15. The spirituality of stewardship. The U.S. bishops wrote in their Pastoral Letter on Stewardship (1992) that Jesus’ disciples and Christian stewards recognize God as the origin of life, giver of freedom, and source of all things, and that we are grateful for the gifts we have received and are eager to use them to show our love for God and for one another. The spirituality of stewardship does not begin with our financial donations, but with an encounter of faith. The spirituality of stewardship will flourish in our diocese by increasing the participation of all parishioners, especially the young and fallen away Catholics, in their parish.

16. Strengthening co-responsibility. The fostering of a stewardship way of life will bear the fruit of an even greater diversity of charisms. That fruit will only mature in a parish culture of co-responsibility for a harmonious and integrated missionary effort.



THIS PROPOSED WINDOW FOR THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH ILLUSTRATES THE STORY OF EMMAUS. Jesus is framed by window curtains blowing open, symbolic of the spiritual gift of understanding and by a monstrance symbolic of worship: Did not our hearts burn within us? The two disciples suggest our response to the presence of Christ. The older Cleopas on the right holds the Scriptures and gestures towards Christ in that “opening” moment of the intellect. The younger disciple on the left leans in with a burning heart to adore and receive the bread and the cup. (Drawing by Associated Crafts & Willet Hauser)

“The Holy Spirit, sent by the Father and the Son, transforms our hearts and enables us to enter into the perfect communion of the blessed Trinity, where all things find their unity,” Pope Francis explains in “The Joy of the Gospel.” From that union come a diversity of expressions and gifts, “a unity which is never uniformity but a multifaceted and inviting harmony” (no. 117). This multifaceted and diverse union provides what the conciliar document “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” (“*Lumen Gentium*”) calls a “familiar dialogue”: “A great many wonderful things are to be hoped for from this familiar dialogue between the laity and their spiritual leaders: in the laity a strengthened sense of personal responsibility; a renewed enthusiasm; a more ready application of their talents to the projects of their spiritual leaders. The latter, on the other hand, aided by the experience of the laity, can more clearly and more incisively come to decisions regarding both spiritual and temporal matters. In this way, the whole Church, strengthened by each one of its members, may more effectively fulfill its mission for the life of the world” (no. 37).

17. Strengthening our use of co-responsibility will de-emphasize the focus on maintenance of current structures and re-emphasize missionary discipleship. It will also create a culture in which vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life can thrive and be supported, serving the future of our Church.

Co-responsibility signifies the mutual respect for the different roles and responsibilities of the clergy and laity in the life and mission of the Church. This implies a culture of respect among the laity for the right and obligation of everyone to be engaged in the mission of the parish. We need everyone at the table, and there is no room for turf issues!

18. Fostering the personal experience of mercy and charity in our parishes.

As a deepening gratitude to God in a spirituality of stewardship increases our volunteerism, and as a culture of co-responsibility takes hold in the parish, more people will experience their local parish as a center of charity and a sanctuary of mercy.

When a parish fulfills the spiritual and corporal works of charity, its members are proclaiming the Good News of salvation. Tangible experiences of charity and mercy change people’s minds about the parish and the Catholic Church as a whole. Mercy changes the hearts of those who receive mercy and those who offer mercy.

19. The Council Fathers’ document “On the Church in the Modern World” (“*Gaudium et Spes*”) beautifully expresses this objective: “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts” (no. 1). We encounter Christ when we engage in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

20. We use the terms “charity” and “mercy” to signify all the ways in which Christ’s presence in the community of believers is experienced. For the purposes of the pastoral plan, the parish as a center of “charity” refers to the ways the Church ministers to those who have material needs: feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, providing transportation for the homebound, etc.

“Mercy” is about reconciliation and forgiveness, but it is also experienced when a parish tangibly extends the Church’s consolation and support in people’s everyday joys and sorrows. The parish as a sanctuary of “mercy” fosters the practice of reconciliation within families and within the community of the parish; providing solace, consolation and support for people.

21. The parish as a recognized center of charity and sanctuary of mercy goes to the heart, to the culture of a parish. We can recognize our parish’s culture especially in how baptisms, funerals, and weddings are celebrated, and how the stranger and the foreigner are welcomed.

Are these merely moments of commercial transactions between individuals and the parish offices? Are those who call our parish office or look for us on the Internet left waiting in the cold?

Or are these opportunities of evangelization when we encounter individuals who have fallen away from the practice of the faith or have never darkened the doorway of our church? What experience would Jesus want them to have of our parish as they mourn the death of a loved one, celebrate the wedding of a friend or family member, or welcome the gift of new life in a family at a baptism? Are we accompanying them as a community of faith in these special moments?

22. It was clear, too, in reviewing the parishes’ plans, that the diocesan pastoral plan must have a focus on improving communications in the parishes, especially in the use of digital information and communication systems.

For most parishioners under a certain age, who are “digital natives,” these systems are vital and necessary for all aspects of their lives. If we, as a Church, see them as nonessential, we are, as one young adult explained, telling young people they, too, are not an essential part of the Church. As Pope Benedict XVI reminded us, we must be digital missionaries, learning the culture of digital natives and bringing the Gospel to their world.

23. As a means of holding ourselves accountable, one of the first-year activities of the diocesan pastoral plan is the creation of an assessment tool parishes can use in evaluating their progress in the implementation of their pastoral plans. We want to ensure our common dream will be accomplished: To have vibrant parishes with a deeper commitment to accomplishing the mission given to us by Jesus Christ; that is, to share and live our Catholic faith in witness to the Kingdom of God.

But for our parishes to thrive, our communion and commitment to one another within the parish and among the parishes in the diocese must be stronger.

THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH (ACTS 2:42)

24. In the Acts of the Apostles, the sequel to the Gospel written by St. Luke, there is a description of the ideal Church community, strong in its communion and piety: “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42). The communion of the Church, as described by St. Luke, is rooted in what we believe as Catholics (the teaching of the Apostles); in how we live the Christian virtues and practice charity (the communal life); and in how we pray as Catholics, especially the Mass and the sacraments (the breaking of the bread and the prayers).

Our communion is strengthened whenever we adhere to the faith, when we practice our faith, and when we celebrate the sacraments in fidelity to Christ. This is why we are “Better Together.” But you and I know our communion needs to be strengthened to address the unprecedented challenges facing our Church today.

25. Many comments from the various listening sessions, and during the discernment processes for the parish and diocesan pastoral plans, surfaced a great concern for our youth and declining participation in our Church. We know the importance of fostering new vocations to the ministerial priesthood. Catechesis was also raised as a matter needing attention, especially in terms in passing on the faith to the next generation.

But what good are our programs of catechesis and faith formation if no one shows up? And how can we promote vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life without healthy parishes?

26. During our gathering of lay leadership in February 2020, we learned how important the transcendentals of truth, beauty and goodness are in attracting the millennial generation to participation in the Church. In particular, we must consider the ways in which the beauty of our faith is expressed. How we celebrate the Sunday Eucharist, with its noble and beautiful grandeur, is important not only for ourselves but for those who have yet to join us at the altar of the Lord. And who can deny the importance of showing the beauty of our faith in our works of charity and mercy for a generation so hungry for it?

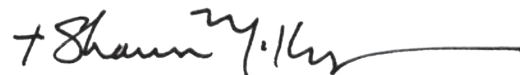
27. If we accomplish the three priorities of the diocesan pastoral plan (spirituality of stewardship; co-responsibility; and parishes as recognized centers of charity and sanctuaries of mercy), our parishes will be successful in their evangelization efforts to invite, welcome, and engage more people in the life and mission of the Church.

For this to happen, change will be necessary for most, if not all, our parishes. We must use our first fruits in the celebration of the Mass and other liturgies, rather than what is left over in the parish budget. And we must redouble our efforts to practice the charity that is sacramentally manifested in the Eucharist: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life!

28. May our diocesan Patroness, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray with us for the fulfillment of our diocesan pastoral plan. With her, may we be the Church at prayer:

*Stay with us, Lord Jesus, on our journey of faith,
and be our companion on our way
to set our hearts on fire with new hope.
Help us to recognize your presence among us
in the Scriptures we read,
and in the breaking of bread.
For you live and reign with the Father,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Given in Columbia, Missouri, at St. Thomas More Newman Center Parish, on the 6th day of February in the Year of St. Joseph, 2021, the third anniversary of my ordination and installation as Bishop of Jefferson City.



Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight
Bishop of Jefferson City

*Excerpts from the English Translation of *Liturgy of the Hours (Four Volumes)* © 1974, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

(COVER) WORKS OF MERCY IN STAINED GLASS shine in St. George Catholic Church in Hermann, Missouri where a series of 13 stained glass windows depict the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The cover of this letter showcases "Holy Mass" and one of the spiritual works of mercy: praying for the living and the dead. One theme of the diocesan pastoral plan is to support clergy and laity in building up their parishes as centers of charity and sanctuaries of mercy. (Photographed by Mike Langille and available for purchase online at www.thisishermann.com/stgeorge.)

A STEWARD'S JOURNEY: OUR CALL TO GREATER COMMUNION

Three Year Diocesan Pastoral Plan

	Strengthening participation (Stewardship)	Strengthening co-responsibility	Strengthening charity and mercy
YEAR ONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch stewardship renewal process with seven pilot parishes Use the pillars of stewardship — hospitality, prayer, formation and service — to inform support from diocesan offices to parishes Provide to parishes small group program that focuses on spirituality of stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide formation for parish pastoral and finance councils Provide formation and education for pastors and heads of schools regarding spirituality of stewardship Encourage the laity to assume their role in strengthening our family of parishes through appropriate and active participation in decision-making regarding structural reconfiguration of parishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist parishes in surveying the unmet needs of the people in the parish's territory Develop an assessment tool for parishes to review how they foster the personal experience of mercy. This tool would include sacramental encounters (e.g. funerals, weddings, baptisms), physical settings at the parish, pastoral approaches and office processes.
	Improve communications for personal engagement in parishes by using unified digital information and communication systems		
YEAR TWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch second pilot cohort of parishes for stewardship renewal program Establish a diocesan Stewardship Council Develop a plan to move from Catholic Stewardship Appeal to Catholic Stewardship Renewal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with the formation of parish stewardship councils Provide formation and education for pastors and heads of schools regarding spirituality of stewardship Provide formation of lay ministry leaders in the parishes to empower works of charity and mercy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a network of Catholic Charities Ambassadors, allowing parishes resources to provide for unmet needs within their parish territory Support parishes in their efforts to foster personal experiences of mercy, based on their assessments.
YEAR THREE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement diocesan-wide Catholic Stewardship Renewal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing consultation of laity regarding opportunities for better collaboration of clergy, lay ecclesial ministers and other resources to strengthen parish life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network with neighboring parishes and/or not-for-profits within the wider area to ensure all unmet needs are met

FR. ALBIN

From page 7

“It seemed like a perfect fit,” he said.

Through the centuries

St. Dominic founded the Order of Preachers, known as the Dominicans, 800 years ago in France.

While traveling with his bishop, Dominic encountered numerous people who held heretical beliefs about Jesus and the Church.

“He was so moved by them, one in particular at an inn, that he stayed up all night to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and how it is revealed in the Catholic Church,” said Fr. Albin.

The experience convinced Dominic and his bishop of the need for some priests to live in community but go out into the world and confidently preach the Gospel.

That led him to establish a new kind of religious order. Members would be “*friars*” — brothers — to one another.

They would forsake marriage and individual ownership of property and pledge holy obedience to their superiors in the order.

Most but not all would eventually become priests.

A different life

Fr. Albin went into formal discernment with the Dominicans with his eyes and mind wide-open.

“You don’t have to be 100 percent sure in the beginning,” he noted.

He said the great challenge of entering religious life at age 29 was not poverty or celibacy but letting go of his autonomy.

“Intentionally moving into a life of obedience is unique and in many ways daunting when you come from a culture that’s always telling you to be self-reliant and not to ask for permission,” he said.

It starts with seeing his religious superiors as icons of Christ.

“You do it because you believe you’re doing what Jesus asks of you,” said Fr. Albin. “Everything we do is to be in conformity with Christ. The reason we’re poor and chaste and obedient is to be like Him. His whole



Dominican Father Joseph Paul Albin elevates the Most Blessed Sacrament during his Mass of Thanksgiving the day after his priestly ordination.

life on earth was an act of humility.”

Fr. Albin believes one of the most powerful ways people in religious life give witness to the world is to form community in spite of differences.

“We can, in fact, live with people with whom we disagree, sometimes passionately, on matters that we all think are important, but still come together five times a day to pray the Psalms,” he said. “I think that’s an example our culture deeply needs today.”

Being formed

Fr. Albin underwent intense personal and communal discernment before the Dominican provincial in New Orleans invited him to enter the novitiate.

He then received his Dominican habit and began living as if he had taken vows.

“You have to spend time living it in order to see if it fits,” he said.

A year later, he accepted the invitation to profess temporary vows in the order, followed by permanent vows four years later.

Only in his second year did he become confident that this was what God wanted for him.

“I never really had that ‘aha’ moment,” he said. “But I began to realize that living in a religious community, I was growing to love God more and I was growing to love my neighbor more and was healthier than I had been before.”

He was being conformed into the image of Christ.

“I didn’t think God would be giving me those graces if I weren’t where I was supposed to

be,” he said.

All the while, he continued emptying himself out in order for Christ to take his place.

“The more I put others first, the greater joy He gives me in my life,” said Fr. Albin

“Ridiculously blessed”

Fr. Albin professed solemn vows in June 2018, in St. Anthony of Padua Church in New Orleans.

“I was so overjoyed, it was ridiculous,” he said.

Friends from every phase and aspect of his life joined him in giving thanks to God.

“I felt the overwhelming support of so many people who had loved me into this vocation,” he said. “My family was there. My old campus ministers were there. Even some of my friends from college who aren’t Catholic.

“Seeing that vast system of loving support confirmed for me that the joy I was feeling was real, and that many people were also full of joy for me,” he said.

After final vows, he entered the *studium*, which is what Dominicans call their seminary studies, at the Aquinas Institute in St. Louis.

There, he completed master’s degrees in theology and divinity.

On July 25, 2020, in the middle of a global pandemic, Bishop Fernand Cheri OFM of New Orleans ordained him to the Holy Priesthood.

“What I mostly remember now is relief,” said Fr. Albin. “My first ordination date was postponed. We changed venues. There was a lot going on.”

Fewer than 100 people — including his parents and his three brothers — could attend. All wore masks and practiced safe distancing.

His mother and Mrs. Hall from the Newman Center in Columbia presented the bread and wine at the offertory.

“It was just beautiful to have two of the women who helped love me into the Priesthood and showed me what service to the people of God looked like, carry the instruments of salvation up to the bishop,” he said.

The grace of Holy Orders nearly overpowered him during his Mass of Thanksgiving the

following day.

“What a wild and feckless move by God — having me act *in persona Christi!*” he said.

“He’s like, ‘I’m going to show My abundant love to My people through this action, through these broken men, so they may be part of My Body.’ It’s just wild!” the priest stated.

He thought his heart would explode with joy as he elevated the Most Blessed Sacrament during the consecration.

“It was a mixture of ‘I can’t believe that I get to do this’ and ‘I am so ridiculously blessed that I get to do this!’” he said.

“Being set free”

Fr. Albin pointed out that he can only be a priest because of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

“God, Who loves to call ordinary and often ridiculous folks to do His work, has called me into that work in a unique way, sacramentally, to serve His people,” he said.

Fr. Albin has discovered in religious life and Priesthood the difference between the pursuit of happiness and the pursuit of joy.

“Happiness is a fleeting feeling,” he said. “Joy is the virtue of knowing and being loved by an intimate and wonderful Lord.”

He believes preaching God’s Word prophetically is as important today as ever.

“All of the teachings of the Church come from a merciful

and loving God,” he said. “You are never restricted by God. You’re always being set free.”

“Take the risk”

Fr. Albin is now assigned to full-time campus ministry at the University of Dallas — something he relishes and believes is essential.

“People in college are often testing their freedoms and their limits for the first time,” he noted. “They tend to be uniquely compassionate and loving and open to new things. That makes this a prime time in life to form an understanding of Who and what God is.”

In a world filled with possibilities, Fr. Albin cautions against becoming a “permanent discerner.”

“There’s only so much reflection you can do from the outside,” he said. “Eventually, you have to take the risk.

“If you’re discerning religious life, go and spend time with a religious community,” he said. “If you’re discerning married life, start having those deep and very real conversations with your partner about what the future might look like.”

He recommends a daily examination: “How am I living God’s will today? In what way am I drawing closer to God today?”

“That daily prayer will open up the rest,” he stated.

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By Father Don Antweiler

ACROSS

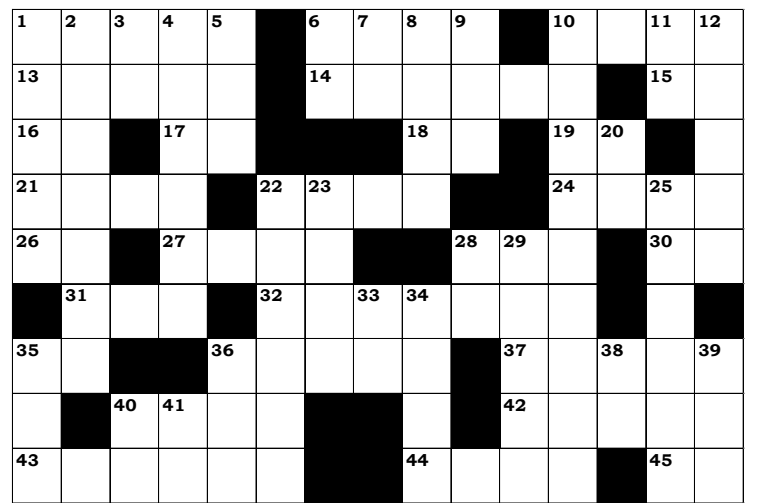
1. More odd and curious ___ about critters and creatures in Mo.
6. ___ Arnaz; Cuban-Am. who played Ricky, husband of Lucy, in the old "I Love Lucy" shows; also a bandleader, comedian, producer, and instrumental in the creation of modern television.
10. All fish in Mo. are "bony fishes," except for the lampreys (6 species in Mo.). They lack both backbone and also lack ___, and so depend for feeding on a sucking disk.
13. This high mountain range runs the length of South America; has the highest mountains outside Asia.
14. What football players do a lot.
15. "When Jesus said to them, 'I ___,' they turned away

- and fell to the ground," (John 18:8).
16. Nein in New York.
17. First Gospel (abbr.).
18. The ___rodynamics of the experimental plane were sound.
19. Fee-___-fo-fum.
21. You may not have noticed but most birds have three toes pointing forward and one backward. Woodpeckers have a different configuration. They have two forward and two backward. This arrangement offers the chisel-beaked birds a no-slip ___ when they're hammering on tree trunks.
22. One of the 5 species of weasel in Mo., the Least Weasel, is the world's smallest ___-eating mammal. At birth, they weigh the same as a raisin. The size of a skinny hamster, they can squeeze through a one-inch hole. Yet, ounce-for-ounce they bite harder than any North Am. mammal, crushing the skulls of the mice they eat.
24. Chickens, for ex.
26. Home State of Mount Rushmore (abbr.).
27. Breaker of the 8th commandment.
28. Author & deliverer of the Gettysburg Address, infor-

- mally.
29. Home State of #28 ACROSS (abbr.).
31. First lady.
32. In 2002, the Mo. Legislature declared the Mo. State Horse to be the Fox ___.
35. Possible abbr. before the name of a Catholic priest.
36. Tall tail: a Red Fox's tail (called a brush) can make up almost 40% of a fox's total length. On chilly nights, foxes curl into doughnuts and wrap their ___ tails around their bodies to stay cozy.
37. I heard they are having ___ on prayer cards and rosaries at Mary's Call in Salisbury, Mo. (2 wds.).
40. He is a ___ under my saddle, so irritating!
42. The notorious biblical cities of ___ and Gomorrah were destroyed by sulfur and fire because of their wickedness (see Genesis 19:24).
43. "You can't leave a footprint that lasts if you're always walking on ___," — Marion Blakey, CEO of Rolls-Royce North Am.
44. Catholic radio & TV channel.
45. The medical school at Washington Univ. (___) in St. Louis (Barnes-Jewish Hosp.) consistently ranks as one of the top 10 medical schools in the country.

DOWN

1. The strangest creature found in Mo., acc. to *Reader's Digest*, is the Giant Desert Centipede, the largest of its kind in North Am. It has ___, a cell rupturing venom, hunts rodents and reptiles, can stretch up into the air to catch bugs, and with the last of its 23 pairs of legs can inflict a painful pinch. At 8 inches long, with a red head, yellow legs and greenish-black body, it



- is easy to spot and avoid. Found in Mo.'s southern-most counties.
2. Listen up, soldier! That's ___! (2 wds.)
3. Savings plan.
4. "Do you not know that your body is a ___ of the holy Spirit within you..." (1 Corinthians 6:19).
5. Fast flier.
6. 5th bk. of the Bible.
7. Abbr. for each.
8. What you might say to shoo a cat.
9. Nickname for the General who became President after Truman.
10. "In the few cities of any significance in those days, and esp. in the state capital, ___ City, (besides July 4 and Christmas) only Jan. 8 (Battle of New Orleans) and Feb. 22 (George Washington's birthday) were celebrated...very strictly," —Gert Goebel in his memoirs of a German immigrant in Mo., 1830s-1880s.
11. The only State named for a President (abbr.).
12. Blind as a...cavefish! The Ozark cavefish is ___, colorless and blind, living its life in the total darkness of cave streams and springs. They have sensors—front, back and sides—and depend for food on bat guano and leaf litter floating in from outside.
20. Moon of Jupiter.
22. There are over 200 species of fish in Mo. and they come in all sizes. Pygmy sunfish and Least Darter fish, when ___, are only one inch long. The Moray Eel can grow to nine feet. The Alligator Gar can reach 10 feet.
23. Makes a mistake.
25. The Babylon weeping ___, native to China, is a popular shade tree named for the way its branches gracefully arch to the ground. Although 12 species grow wild in Mo., this one must be cultivated.
28. ___ the sound of the bell...
29. "Then I saw a ___ come out of the sea with ten horns and seven heads and on its heads blasphemous names," (Revelations 13:1).
33. This State has produced more Presidents than any State except Virginia (abbr.).
34. "Woe to you Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in ___ and Sidon, they would long ago have repented," (Matthew 11:21).
35. Jack Sprat couldn't eat it.
36. Brother of sis.
38. I put an ___ in the newspaper but got no results.
39. Ostrich cousin.
40. Letters for British Petroleum whose reputation was stained by the largest oil spill in the history of marine oil exploration (and the death of 11 oil rig workers) in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010.
41. The Beehive State (abbr.).

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PASTORAL PLAN

From page 1

strategy for how all of us, together, will live out the communion of the Church in response to everything that's going on around us."

The plan is rooted in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and Pope Francis's first encyclical letter, "The Joy of the Gospel."

In that document, the pope directs Catholics to look outward and minister deliberately and creatively to all people living within the territory of the parish — not just those who take part in parish life.

"The parish," the pope states, "is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration" ("Joy of the Gospel," #28).

From the ground up

Last winter, Bishop McKnight requested all parishes to discern their own plans for carrying-out the Church's vision for parish life within their geographic territory.

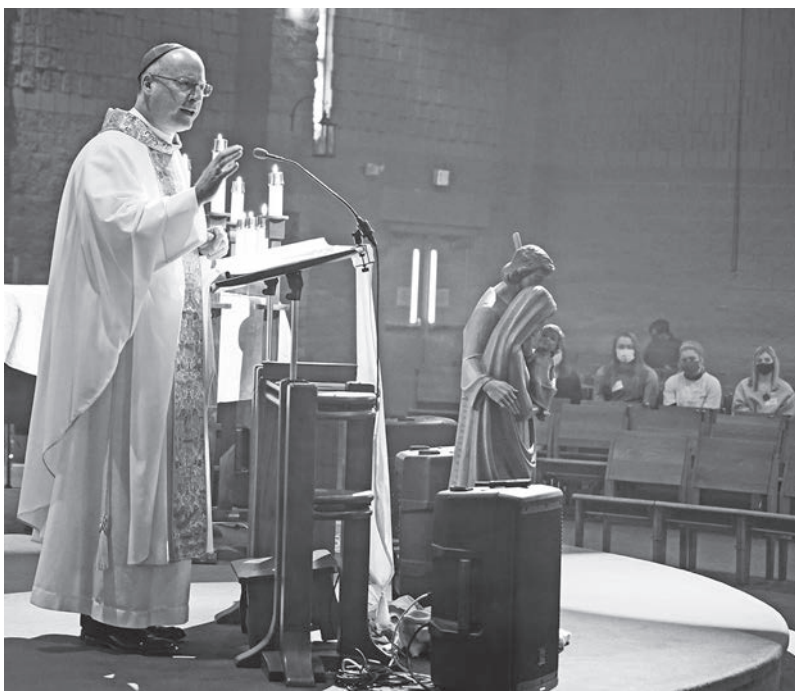
The bishop and his advisors gave a timeline and process for praying, discussing and assessing each parish's strengths and weaknesses in the areas of:

- cultivating a spirituality rooted in the Catholic understanding of stewardship;
- promoting effective co-responsibility among ordained ministers and the laity; and
- helping every parish become universally recognized as a center of charity and a sanctuary of a mercy within the larger community.

Pastors and lay leaders turned parishioners' suggestions into doable, measurable objectives for carrying-out the three goals over the next three years.

The diocesan staff received parish pastoral plans from 70 parishes.

Throughout the summer, a group comprised of Diocesan Pastoral Council member Rick Nichols; LeAnn Korsmeyer, diocesan director of parish and charitable services; Father Jason Doke, moderator of the curia; Father Stephen



Bishop W. Shawn McKnight speaks of the new pastoral plan for the Jefferson City diocese in his homily during Mass with college students Feb. 6 in the St. Thomas More Newman Center Chapel in Columbia.
— Photo by Jay Nies

Jones, director of stewardship, and Bishop McKnight reviewed and tabulated each of the plans.

Teens took part in online gatherings to give additional input.

Members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council met in August to ascertain themes and patterns among all of the parish plans.

Their observations formed the basis for a working document presented at a September assembly of lay representatives throughout the diocese.

Participants discussed the working document in small groups — specifically the aspects that ignite their passion, items that need clarification, and any concerns.

Their insights figured into creating a revised working document of the diocesan plan.

Bishop McKnight consulted with the priests of the diocese during their annual fall Institute before casting a final draft.

He said the plan will shape how the diocese "coordinates and leverages its resources over the next three years, to assist the parishes in fulfilling their own goals and their own activities to which they are holding themselves accountable."

A role for everyone

Each year under the plan, the diocese and its parishes will

work together on specific objectives for promoting a spirituality of stewardship, creating a culture of co-responsibility and strengthening charity and mercy in the parishes.

Among the highlights are:

- establishing a diocesan Stewardship Council and evolving the diocesan Catholic Stewardship Appeal into a parish-based Catholic Stewardship Renewal;
- providing parishes with assessment tools to determine the effectiveness of their parish plans;
- providing ongoing formation for laypeople and clergy to work together to strengthen parish life;
- calling for a more merciful approach to those coming to the parishes for important moments, such as funerals, weddings and baptisms, to welcome and support them;
- helping parishes recognize charitable needs within their communities and form partnerships with neighboring parishes, Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri and other agencies to meet those needs; and
- making the best use of communication technology to keep parishioners informed and engaged.

"It really is about encouraging and inviting everyone to take their place and embrace their role in the mission of the

Church," the bishop stated.

Measure of success

Bishop McKnight wrote a pastoral letter to the people of the diocese to shed light on the pastoral plan and its purpose.

In the letter, he acknowledges many of the challenges facing the Church, the United States and local communities in this time of pandemic and polarization.

"But I have some good news to share with you," he states. "The Lord has a future full of hope for us."

He calls to mind St. Luke's account of the two disciples who unknowingly encounter the risen Jesus on the road away from Jerusalem on the first Easter Sunday.

"Do you, with me, desire your heart to burn within you?" the bishop writes. "Are you open, like the two disciples in the Emmaus story, to listen to Jesus and to let Him change your mind about things that tempt you to be downcast, confused and troubled?"

The bishop then sheds light on the process that went into creating the plan, with clear evidence of the Holy Spirit's inspiration.

The bishop then provides insight into the three pillars of the plan: a spirituality of stewardship; co-responsibility; and parishes as centers of charity and sanctuaries of mercy.

He closes the pastoral letter with a reflection on the ideal Church presented in Acts

2:42: "They devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers."

"Our communion," the bishop asserts, "is strengthened whenever we adhere to the faith, when we practice our faith, and when we celebrate the sacraments in fidelity to Christ. This is why we are 'Better Together.'"

He predicts that if the entire Roman Catholic Church in central and northeastern Missouri succeeds in the three priorities in the plan, "our parishes will be successful in their evangelization efforts to invite, welcome and engage more people in the life and mission of the Church."

The pastoral plan and the bishop's pastoral letter can be found at: diojeffcity.org/pastoral-plan.



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Fundraisers & Social Events

Feb. 19

Camdenton, K of C carry-out fish fry, 5-7 pm; **Columbia**, K of C 1529 drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7:30 pm, K of C Hall; **Cuba**, Holy Cross Parish drive-thru fish & shrimp dinner, 4:30-6:30 pm; **Eldon**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 5-7 pm, Eldon Catholic Center; **Glasgow**, K of C carry-out fish fry, 5-7:30 pm; **Hannibal**, K of C Lenten fish fry, 4:30-7 pm; **Holts Summit**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 3:30-7 pm, St. Andrew Parish's Veit Hall; **Jefferson City**, K of C 1054 drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm, K of C Hall; **Jefferson City**, K of C 12992 drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph Undercroft; **Koeltztown**, AK Crusaders Relay for Life drive-thru fish fry, 4-7 pm, St. Boniface Center; **Linn**, K of C drive-thru fish dinner, 4:30-7 pm, St. George Parish; **Marceline**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7:30 pm; **Pilot Grove**, St. Joseph Home & School drive-thru fish fry, 5-7:30 pm, parish basement; **St. Mar-**

tins, St. Martin Home & School drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm; **Taos**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7:30 pm; **Tipton**, K of C curbside pick-up fish fry, 4-7:30 pm

Feb. 26

Camdenton, K of C carry-out fish fry, 5-7 pm; **Cuba**, Holy Cross Parish drive-thru fish & shrimp dinner, 4:30-6:30 pm; **Eldon**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 5-7 pm, Eldon Catholic Center; **Fayette**, K of C fish fry, 5-7 pm; **Hannibal**, K of C Lenten fish fry, 4:30-7 pm; **Holts Summit**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 3:30-7 pm, St. Andrew Parish's Veit Hall; **Jefferson City**, K of C 1054 drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm, K of C Hall; **Jefferson City**, K of C 12992 drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph Undercroft; **Rich Fountain**, Sacred Heart Parish drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7:30 pm; **St. Thomas**, St. Thomas/Meta K of C drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm, St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Center; **Salisbury**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 4-7 pm; **Taos**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7:30 pm

Feb. 27

VIRTUAL, Our Lady of Snows Parish fantasy night, 6-9 pm, for info visit ourladyofthesnows.diojeffcity.org

Mar. 5

California, K of C curbside fish fry, 4-7 pm, Annunciation Parish Annex; **Camdenton**, K of C carry-out fish fry, 5-7 pm; **Cuba**, Holy Cross Parish drive-thru fish & shrimp dinner, 4:30-6:30 pm; **Eldon**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 5-7 pm, Eldon Catholic Center; **Fulton**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 4-7 pm, St. Peter Parish; **Glasgow**, K of C carry-out shrimp boil, 5-7:30 pm; **Hannibal**, K of C Lenten fish fry, 4:30-7 pm; **Holts Summit**, K of C drive-thru fish fry, 3:30-7 pm, St. Andrew Parish's Veit Hall; **Jefferson City**, K of C

1054 drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm, K of C Hall; **St. Martins**, St. Martin Home & School drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7 pm; **Wardsville**, Wardsville/Osage Bend K of C drive-thru fish fry, 4:30-7:30 pm, St. Stanislaus Parish

Mar. 11-14

Jefferson City, "Back to the 80s," Helias Catholic High School spring musical, evening performances Thurs, Fri, Sat at 7 pm, matinees Sat & Sun at 2 pm, Miller Performing Arts Center, for tickets call 573-635-6139

Meetings & Conferences

Feb. 25

VIRTUAL, Cursillo Grand Reunion, 7-8:15 pm, for info or to

join Zoom meeting visit diojeffcity.org/cursillo

Mar. 10

VIRTUAL, Catholic Charities refugee resettlement program orientation, 5:30-6:30 pm, for info or to register, contact Diana Twombly at 573-442-7568 or dtwombly@cccno.org

Youth & Young Adults

Apr. 21

Jefferson City, "Purified" chastity presentation for teens & parents with Jason Evert, for 6-8 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph, for info or to register visit cathedral.diojeffcity.org/purified-tickets

GRADUATES

From page 10

cated her life to giving back to the parish and her elementary school.

She served for many years as director of St. Joseph Parish School of Religion (PSR) and the high school PSR program.

She works with the Parents as Teacher Program for Fatima R-3 School District.

For the past several years, she has been a substitute teacher for St. Joseph School in all areas of academics.

Her husband Kurt and her three sons are alumni, and two of their four grandchil-

dren are students at St. Joseph School.

The Unterrified Democrat

newspaper in Linn and reporter Ryan Sheehan of the Sedalia Democrat newspaper in Sedalia contributed to this report.

Planning an event?

To request an advertisement, or have your event listed in the Things To Do and diocesan website calendar, go to diojeffcity.org/event-listing

FR. DOYLE

From page 8

mediately" after the birth of Jesus. Luke 2:39 simply says of Jesus, Mary and Joseph: "When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth."

Each Gospel writer was selective about the details of Jesus' life, according to his purposes. Matthew, for example, doesn't mention the presentation or the finding of Jesus in the Temple.

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

MARROCCO

From page 9

beside us. Or inside us.

Reflecting on his question — What time is it? — touches a theme that's central in the letters of St. Paul: It's time to put off the old self and be renewed and strengthened in the inner self.

Even for our fairy-tale siblings, this was the real purpose of setting forth to find their fortunes — though it was practical need that sent them out in the first place. Concrete physical needs often give us the impetus to move from where we are (not an easy thing for us humans, breakable and naturally cautious) to where we never have been but really belong.

Out to the peripheries — that hold a secret. We can't discover this secret if we stay where and as we are. But we can recognize it when we get there.

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Douglas & Bethany Deeken, 17 years
Douglas & Robin Hilke, 10 years

Brinktown, Holy Guardian Angels

Don & Donna Knapp, 46 years
Daniel & Marita Wansing, 33 years

Camdenton, St. Anthony

Jim & Rose McCullough, 61 years
George & Jean Stuckel, 61 years

Freeburg, Holy Family

Pat & Sandy Haller, 58 years
Duane & Carma Wegman, 52 years
Harry & Linda Struempf, 50 years
Carl & Sherri Lewis, 24 years
Noland & Jody Stuecken, 18 years
Dusty & Erin Fick, 10 years

Jonesburg, St. Patrick

John & Nancy Cobb, 50 years
Josh & Sara Johnson, 17 years
Feb 26 Brad & Julie Ellis, 16 years

Koeltztown, St. Boniface

Arnold & Sandra Wulff, 41 years

Martinsburg, St. Joseph

Bob & Nancy Mette, 45 years
Rodney & Cindy Shramek, 39 years
Allen & Diana Sommer, 39 years
Richard & Christine DeTienne, 27 years

Rich Fountain, Sacred Heart

Mike & Suzanne Bauer, 47 years
Bill & Karen Bax, 45 years

Sedalia, St. Vincent de Paul

Marvin & Kathy Brownfield, 53 Years
Bob & Karolyn Spears, 53 Years
James & Rose Rybak, 52 Years
Jim & Carol Schibi, 52 Years
Michael & Margaret Hart, 50 years
Keith & Janie Haulotte, 40 years
Darrell & Diane Rhodus, 40 years
Jorge & Virginia Bravo, 35 years
Kent & Linda Keethler, 35 years
Dennis & Sandy Cline, 30 years

Sweet Springs, Holy Family

Russell & Janet Scott, 50 years

Vienna, Visitation

Ken & Peggy Neubert, 33 years
Ethan & Erin Murphy, 17 years

Vandalia, Sacred Heart

Mark & Sandy Klott, 37 years
Danny & Tina Hubert, 36 years
Troy & Denise Allen, 28 years
David & Alisha Hays, 20 years
Michael & Amanda McCurdy, 17 years

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels

Junior & Mary Lou Marek, 64 years
Glen & Janet Niemeier, 43 years
Darryl & Alice Niemeier, 40 years
Greg & Patti White, 37 years
Greg & Carol Burstert, 31 years
Hank & Ashlee Pennington, 18 years
Adam & Leigh Ann Stallo, 17 years

Marriages

Holts Summit, St. Andrew — **Samantha Wells & Cole Berhorst**

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Katherine Harris & Derrick Jennings**

Deaths

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul — **Samma Brengarth**

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — **Jerry O'Laughlin**

Eldon, Sacred Heart — **Mark T. Wiethaupt**

Fulton, St. Peter — **Thelma Lander**

Hannibal, Holy Family — **Mary Garrett**

Hermann, St. George — **Tim Hackmann**

Holts Summit, St. Andrew — **Robert L. Acree Sr.**

Jefferson City, Cathedral of St. Joseph — **Robert L. Heald, Emil J. "EJ" Kressig**

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Beatrice F. "Betty" Bernskoetter, Paul Lage**

Jefferson City, St. Peter — **Robert L. Ferguson**

Kirkville, Mary Immaculate — **Penny Tiedemann**

Lake Ozark, Our Lady of the Lake — **Jim Tapella**

Linn, St. George — **Rosemary "Rosie" Voss**

Loose Creek, Immaculate Conception — **Linda L. Jost**

Russellville, St. Michael — **Clarence W. "Pat" Meller**

St. Clement, St. Clement — **Bernice Schuckenbrock**

St. Robert, St. Robert Bellarmine — **Ralph E. Fox**

Taos, St. Francis Xavier — **Clarence H. Haller**

Versailles, St. Philip Benizi — **Shirley Dreyer**

Wardsville, St. Stanislaus — **Doris Lee Markway**

Westphalia, St. Joseph — **Thomas Lee Kempker**

Birthdays

Freeburg, Holy Family — **Esther Lauberth**, her 94th birthday on Feb. 28

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Nadine Dellbringge**, her 97th on Feb. 9

Linn, St. George — **Clarabelle Dorweiler**, her 100th on Feb. 20

Marceline, St. Bonaventure — **Florence Ewigman**, her 90th on Feb. 27

Pilot Grove, St. Joseph — **Rita Martin**, her 99th on Feb. 14

Baptisms

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — **Sunny Cramer, Harrison Rugen, Kennedy Rugen, Oliver Simmens, Bianca Smith**

Freeburg, Holy Family — **Max Lee Haslag**, son of Cody & Taylor Haslag

Holts Summit, St. Andrew — **Austin Lane Suggett**, son of Tim & Chelsie Suggett

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Tate Matthew Patterson**, son of Morgan & Danielle Patterson

Kirkville, Mary Immaculate — **Charles Isaac Zeman**, son of Charles J. Zeman & Soon Jin Kim; **Jesse Allen Grove**

Mary's Home, Our Lady of the Snows — **Anna Marie, Carter Eugene and MacKenzie Lynn Berry**, children of Brooke Werdehausen

St. Anthony, St. Anthony of Padua — **Sadie SueAnn Otto**, daughter of Clinton & Amanda Otto

St. Martins, St. Martin — **Theo Anthony**, son of Colin & Melanie Anthony

St. Thomas, St. Thomas the Apostle — **Adelia Helen Hake**, daughter of Patrick & Corinn Hake; **Garrett Douglas Otto**, son of Donnie & Katelyn Otto

Westphalia, St. Joseph — **Evie June DuValues**, daughter Ashley & Brian DuValues

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels — **Ryleigh Mae Allen**, daughter of Eric & Jennifer Allen

IRAQ

From page 6

Others worship in the Syriac Catholic Church, while a modest number of belong to the Latin, Maronite, Greek, Coptic and Armenian churches. There are also non-Catholic churches like the Assyrian Church and Protestant denominations.

Once numbering about 1.5 million, hundreds of thousands of Christians fled sectarian violence after Saddam's ouster as churches in Baghdad were bombed, kidnappings took place, and other sectarian attacks erupted.

They either headed north or left the country altogether. Christians were driven out of their ancestral homeland in the Ninevah Plain when Islamic State captured that region in 2014. A record number of Christians fled due to their atrocities until its liberation in 2017. Now, Christian numbers in Iraq have dwindled to about 150,000.

The uprooted Christian community, which claims an apostolic origin and still uses Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, is desperate to see its plight end.

BOARD

From page 9

Scouts of America, serving as Scoutmaster for BA Troop 242 (sponsored by St. Thomas More Newman Center).

They have two grown sons — Adam, who graduated from Helias Catholic High School in Jefferson City, and Henry, a Tolton Catholic alumnus.

When asked why serving in this capacity was a priority for her, Julie said the opportunity for young people to be educated in a faith-filled environment that addresses all aspects of their development is a gift not to be taken for granted.

"Catholic education has a long successful tradition in the world," she said. "... This continued opportunity must be nurtured by the members of a community to be successful over the long term. If I can provide a service in support of Catholic schools, that is fulfilling on so many levels."

Fellow board members include: Father Christopher Cordes, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Columbia, chairman; Monsignor Robert A. Kurwicki, vicar general of the diocese; Father William Peckman pastor of Ss. Peter & Paul Parish in Boonville; Dr. Erin Vader, diocesan superintendent of Catholic Schools; and *ex officio* member Dr. Daniel Everett, president and principal of Tolton Catholic.

The Tolton Catholic High School community is proud and grateful to welcome both new board members.

Crossword puzzle answers

1	A	35	S	26	G	21	N	16	A	13	F
2	R	31	D	27	R	O	A	17	N	14	A
3	I	36	V	28	I	M	E	18	D	15	C
4	P	40	E	29	P	T	S	19	E	16	T
5	T	41	T	30	M	A	S	20	S	17	S
6	O	42	A	31	A	M	T	21	R	18	D
7	E	43	R	32	R	E	A	22	T	19	E
8		44	S	33	H	A	A	23	A	20	A
9		45	Y	34	T	T	A	24	C	21	S
10		46	R	35	A	E	A	25	K	22	I
11		47	W	36	T	A	E	26	L	23	I
12		48	T	37	E	B	F	27	L	24	J
13		49	S	38	A	R	F	28	E	25	F
14		50	O	39	S	E	I	29	O	26	A
15		51	D	40	A	O	I	30	W	27	A
16		52	D	41	L	L	W	31	L	28	A
17		53	O	42	L	L	L	32	A	29	M
18		54	M	43	E	L	A	33	S	30	S

Cardinals for Life



A group of South Shelby High School students in Shelbina, along with pastors and other members of the community, take part in the South Shelby Cardinals for Life pro-life March on Jan. 29. The purpose was “to continue standing up for the sanctity of all human life, from the womb to the tomb, all races, all religions, all cultures, all people!” the event’s organizers stated.
— Photos by Amanda Durbin

Over the hills of snow

Kindergarteners at St. Andrew School in Tipton attempt to build a snowman on Jan. 28. They include (front row) Ruby Tuttle, Priscilla Huff, Jules Millan, Vida Pettigrew, Ila Pe-tree, Ian Foster, Ak-enii Price (back row) Cain Drinkard, Piper Twyman, Lorna Hunsburger, Sebastian Romo and Payton Stoecklein.

— Photo by Principal Julie Mitchem, courtesy of the Tipton Times



Trailblazers march!



Snow birds in Cuba



Here are a few of the cotton-ball penguins made by students in art class at Holy Cross School in Cuba. Then, after pre-kindergarten/kindergarten teacher Elaine Barreca asked what they were thankful for, they all said they were thankful for penguins and art class.

— Photo from the Holy Cross Catholic Church Cuba Missouri Facebook page



In lieu of traveling to Washington, D.C. this year for the national March for Life, students of Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School in Columbia take part in a pro-life march around Perry Phillips Lake behind the school on Jan. 29. The school’s Pro-Life Club organized the march.

— Photos from the Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School Facebook page

Jesus' friends witness His transfiguration

By Jennifer Ficaglia
Catholic News Service

Jesus taught the people and performed miracles as He traveled to different places with His apostles.

One time, Jesus fed a crowd of 4,000 people with seven loaves of bread and a few fish. After everyone ate their fill, there were seven baskets of food left over. Another time, He restored sight to a blind man in Bethsaida.

During these travels, Jesus talked to the apostles about many things. As they were heading toward the villages of Caesarea Philippi one day, He asked them a question.

"Who do people say that I am?" He asked His friends.

"John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the



prophets," they answered.

"But who do you say that I am?" He wanted to know.

"You are the Messiah," Peter replied.

Jesus warned the apostles

not to tell anyone.

He then began teaching His friends that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and

that He would be killed and rise after three days.

After six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John and led them up a high mountain while the other apostles remained behind.

Jesus was transfigured before His friends' eyes, and His clothes became a dazzling white.

Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking to Jesus.

Peter, James and John were so terrified that they really didn't know what they should do or say.

"Rabbi, it is good that we are here!" Peter managed to get out. "Let us make three tents: one for You, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

After Peter spoke, a cloud came and cast a shadow over

them.

A voice could be heard from the cloud.

"This is My beloved Son. Listen to Him," the voice said.

Suddenly, Peter, James and John looked around. Moses and Elijah were gone, and Jesus was alone with them.

As they came down the mountain, Jesus told His friends not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant.

Read more about it... Mark 8 & 9

1. What did the transfigured Jesus' clothes look like?
2. Who appeared to speak to Jesus?

Bible Accent

In Mark 9, we read that Jesus, Peter, James and John saw quite a sight when they came down the mountain.

A large crowd had gathered around the rest of the apostles, and some scribes were arguing with them.

"What are you arguing about with them?" Jesus asked.

"Teacher, I have brought to you my son possessed by a mute spirit. ... I asked Your disciples to drive it out, but they were unable to do so," a man in the crowd said.

Jesus asked for the boy to be brought to Him. The spirit

threw the boy into convulsions, and the boy fell on the ground, rolled around and foamed at the mouth.

"It has often thrown him into fire and into water to kill him," the father said. "But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

"If you can! Everything is possible to one who has faith," Jesus replied.

"I do believe, help my unbelief!" the boy's father cried.

"Mute and deaf spirit, I command you: Come out of him and never enter him again!" Jesus said.

The unclean spirit left the boy, and Jesus helped the boy to stand.

Trivia

What item did Jesus and the apostles forget to bring in the boat during their travels? (Hint: Mark 8:4)

Answer: Bread.



Saint Spotlight

St. Joseph was the husband of Mary and the earthly father of Jesus. He was a carpenter, and he also was a relative of King David. Joseph is a model of humility and obedience to God's will. He followed God's instructions that had been given by angels in dreams. In his first dream, he was told to take the pregnant

Mary into his home as his wife. Right after Jesus was born, he was warned in a dream to protect Mary and the Baby by fleeing to Egypt. To commemorate the 150th anniversary of Joseph being declared patron of the universal Church, Pope Francis proclaimed a yearlong celebration dedicated to the saint. We remember Joseph on March 19.

Puzzle

Unscramble the letters in the words and arrange them to form a quotation from the children's story.

ays ma how i leeppo od hatt

Sentence:

_____?



Answers: say, am, who, I, people, do, that. Who do people say that I am?


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'Return' offers parents a game plan to bring their children back to the faith

Christian Newswire

Irving, Texas

The Catholic Church is hemorrhaging young people.

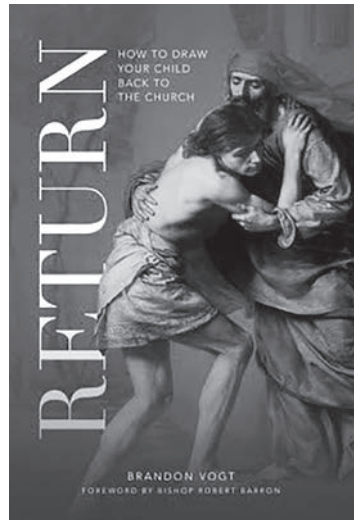
Studies show that 50 percent of young people who were raised Catholic are no longer Catholic today, and that 6.5 people leave the Church for every one who joins.

Behind these statistics are countless stories of wounded families. Millions of mothers and fathers are longing for their prodigal children to come home to the Church, asking: "Where did we go wrong?"

Brandon Vogt's new book, *Return: How to Draw Your Child Back to the Church*, looks at the real reasons why young people drift away and offers parents a clear plan for bringing their children back.

The book's release by Bishop Robert Barron's Word on Fire Catholic Ministries is accompanied by a free small-group study guide for parishes, families and other small groups to use while reading the book together.

Mr. Vogt is Word on Fire's senior content director. He's the author of 10 books, sev-



eral of which have been #1 Amazon bestsellers and have earned First Place awards from both the Catholic Press Association and the Association of Catholic Publishers.

"Despite all the challenges facing the Church today, from COVID to the sexual-abuse crisis fallout, I still think our biggest problem remains attrition," he stated. "We're hemorrhaging young people from the Church — and of course COVID isn't helping that trend."

He said the greatest challenge for Catholic parents and Church leaders right now is how to propose the Gospel of

Jesus Christ to young people in a compelling way.

"How do we convince our kids that Catholicism is true, good and beautiful?" he asked. "And if they've already drifted from the Church, how do we draw them back?"

He said the passive, wait-and-see approach is no longer an option.

"For parents nearing despair over their fallen-away children, this book offers more than mere inspiration and hope, good as those things are," said Mr. Vogt. "It offers a clear, practical game plan that works."

He is also the host of the weekly Word on Fire Show podcast with Bishop Barron, as well as "The Burrowshire Podcast" with Father Blake Britton.

His work has been featured by NPR, Fox News, CBS, EWTN, Vatican Radio, *Our Sunday Visitor*, *National Review*, and *Christianity Today*.

Word on Fire Catholic Ministries exists to draw people into the Body of Christ, which is the Church, and thereby give them access to all the gifts that Jesus wants His people to enjoy.

To be most effective in this mission, Word on Fire places an emphasis and urgency on the use of contemporary forms of media and innovative communication technologies.

For information or to order *Return: How to Draw Your Child Back to the Church*, visit wordonfire.org/return/

Movie Ratings



Adults

The Dig (PG-13)
Greenland (PG-13)
Herself (R)
Judas and the Black Messiah (R)
Land (PG-13)
The Little Things (R)
The Marksman (PG-13)
Minari (PG-13)
Our Friend (R)



Limited Adult Audience

The White Tiger (R)

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

Parents get advice on helping 'screenagers' navigate social media

Parenting in the Screen Age: A Guide for Calm Conversations, by Dr. Delaney Ruston. Starhouse Media (San Anselmo, California, 2020). 372 pp., \$19.95.

Reviewed by Allan F. Wright
Catholic News Service

Dr. Delaney Ruston, a Stanford-trained physician, mental health advocate and award-winning filmmaker of the movie "Screenagers," has penned a comprehensive book that enables parents to navigate the confusing world of social media, smartphones and emerging technologies.

The book includes wide-ranging topics such as social media, video games, mental health, sleep deprivation, screen-related conversations, family rules, fostering human bonds and other thought-provoking chapters.

Ruston does not give hard and fast rules for use of social media and she readily acknowledges the benefits and reality of the fast-paced, information-based culture in which our children are living.

She does bring to light the issues surrounding the use of these technologies and social networks that directly impact young people and families.

One of the most useful chapters contains a wealth of practical information regarding contracts and family rules for appropriate use of technology.

Examples of rules, situa-

tions and conversations parents should have with their children regarding appropriate and inappropriate use of technology allow the reader to craft boundaries for their own children.

Ruston cites a number of authoritative sources such as the World Health Organization, American Psychiatric Association and the National Center for Health Research in bringing to light the addictive nature of video games and social media that so often plagues our young people and frustrates parents.

"Indeed, when researchers have analyzed surveys that asked teens questions about depression symptoms and time spent on social media, they have often found that more time on screens correlates with a higher chance of reporting depression symptoms," she writes.

Rather than leave the reader in a quandary, she offers ideas for conversation starters that are reasonable and allow the young person to be part of the solution.

There is nothing necessarily Catholic or Christian about this book, yet there is nothing that a Catholic parent would object to on the basis of the teaching of the Church.

This book will be helpful not only for parents, but teachers and counselors will find this a valuable tool for engaging and helping young people navigate the world of social media and video games in a healthy way.

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94.7 FM, Columbia
103.3 FM, Fulton
K216GM 91.1 FM, Canton

LENT

From page 1

that demean, sadden, anger or show scorn,” a quote from the encyclical.

“In order to give hope to others, it is sometimes enough simply to be kind, to be willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference,” he said, again quoting the document.

The Lenten practices of fasting, almsgiving and prayer were preached by Jesus and continue to help believers experience and express conversion, the pope wrote.

“The path of poverty and self-denial” through fasting, “concern and loving care for the poor” through almsgiving and “childlike dialogue with the Father” through prayer, he said, “make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity.”

Pope Francis emphasized



Pope Francis hears the confession of a priest at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome in this March 7, 2019, file photo. — CNS photo/Vatican Media

the importance of fasting “as a form of self-denial” to rediscover one’s total dependence on God and to open one’s heart to the poor.

“Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down — like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false — in order to open the doors of our hearts to the One Who comes to us, poor in all things, yet full of grace and truth: the Son of God our savior.”

Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for

Promoting Integral Human Development, presenting the message at a news conference, also insisted on the importance of “fasting and all forms of abstinence,” for example, by giving up “time watching TV so we can go to church, pray or say a rosary. It is only through self-denial that we dis-

cipline ourselves to be able to take the gaze off ourselves and to recognize the other, reckon with his needs and thus create access to benefits and goods for people,” ensuring respect for their dignity and rights.

Monsignor Bruno-Marie Duffe, secretary of the dicastery, said that at a time of “anxiety, doubt and sometimes even despair” because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lent is a time for Christians “to walk the way with Christ toward a new life and a new world, toward a new trust in God and in the future.”

FREEDOM

From page 5

Fr. Peckman.

He surmised that 2020, with its plentiful manifestations of evil and isolation, helped create a demand for something challenging, spiritually engaging and powerful.

“We see all these things going on around us and we feel helpless, but we’re not!” he stated. “By the grace of God, these things are all conquerable.”

The wrong enemies

Fr. Peckman emphasized the importance of Catholics understanding and reclaiming spiritual warfare.

“We’ve got job to do as a Church that desperately needs to be done,” the priest stated. “It’s what we’re made for. The warrior is more himself when he’s engaged than when he’s cowering.”

He pointed to an observation Jesus made after driving out a demon shortly after His Transfiguration: Some demons can only be driven out by prayer and fasting.

Fr. Peckman noted that Pope Francis — like his predecessors, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and Pope St. John Paul II — speaks clearly about exorcisms and doing battle with the devil.

Fr. Peckman insisted that some of the most shocking evil in humanity’s history has taken

place in the past 150 years.

It has coincided with the growing ambivalence to the reality of spiritual battle in the world.

“We have redirected the fight we used to take to Satan, and we now use it against each other,” he said. “Instead of seeing the supernatural forces that are tempting and provoking us, we now only see each other as the enemy and treat each other in the same way an exorcist would treat a demon — namely, ‘Be gone!’”

Fr. Peckman believes that’s why reasonable debates have given way to shouting and drowning-out of opposition — akin to exorcism.

“We do not merely want to silence but to eliminate,” he said. “The belligerence and ferocity of these divisions continues to grow stronger.”

All the while, Satan cackles.

“The demons laugh with glee,” said Fr. Peckman. “They operate almost unrestricted and let those they influence take the blame.”

“We no longer fight them as we once did,” the priest asserted. “We punish their earthly proxies.”

Let Freedom Ring: 40 Days for Freedom from the Devil is available online at romancatholicgear.com.

Daily Readings

Sunday, Feb 21

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT
Gn. 9:8-15
Ps. 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
1 Pt. 3:18-22
Mk. 1:12-15

Monday, Feb 22

The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle
1 Pt. 5:1-4
Ps. 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6
Mt. 16:13-19

Tuesday, Feb 23

St. Polycarp, bishop and martyr
Is. 55:10-11
Ps. 34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19
Mt. 6:7-15

Wednesday, Feb 24

Jon. 3:1-10
Ps. 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19
Lk. 11:29-32

Thursday, Feb 25

Est. C:12, 14-16, 23-25
Ps. 138:1-2ab, 2cde-3, 7c-8
Mt. 7:7-12

Friday, Feb 26

Ez. 18:21-28
Ps. 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8
Mt. 5:20-26

Saturday, Feb 27

Dt. 26:16-19
Ps. 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8
Mt. 5:43-48

Sunday, Feb 28

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT
Gn. 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
Ps. 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19
Rom. 8:31b-34
Mk. 9:2-10

Monday, Mar 1

Dn. 9:4b-10
Ps. 79:8, 9, 11 and 13
Lk. 6:36-38

Tuesday, Mar 2

Is. 1:10, 16-20
Ps. 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23
Mt. 23:1-12

Wednesday, Mar 3

St. Katharine Drexel, virgin (USA)
Jer. 18:18-20
Ps. 31:5-6, 14, 15-16
Mt. 20:17-28

Thursday, Mar 4

St. Casimir
Jer. 17:5-10
Ps. 1:1-2, 3, 4, 6
Lk. 16:19-31

Friday, Mar 5

Gn. 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a
Ps. 105:16-17, 18-19, 20-21
Mt. 21:33-43, 45-46

Saturday, Mar 6

Mi. 7:14-15, 18-20
Ps. 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12
Lk. 15:1-3, 11-32

The Holy Father’s prayer intentions for February:

We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded.

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Annual Knights of Columbus

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Friday, February 19


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4-7:30 p.m.

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Fish Fry

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Fridays—February 19 & 26
March 5, 12 & 19

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Nightly Rosary for Peace and Patience

Barb Alber, a member of St. Mary Parish in Shelbina, has been leading a livestreamed Rosary for Peace and Patience during the coronavirus pandemic each day on Facebook

since March 25, 2020.

More than 300 people have joined her Facebook group.

She leads the prayers from her living room each evening at 7 p.m.

She also sends out a daily Facebook post to all the members asking them for any special intentions to pray for during that day's Rosary.

Fellow St. Mary parishioner Pat Greenwell hopes the group will continue to grow.

"With the way the world is now, we need all the help we can get," he said. "The more people saying a Rosary at one time, the more power it has in fighting the devil."

Contact Barb Alber on Facebook Messenger or at bkalber73@gmail.com to sign up for the group.

K of C Council #1529

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February 19 & March 19

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St. Thomas/Meta Knights of Columbus Council #2149

FISH FRY

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St. Thomas

Friday, February 26 4:30-7PM

DRIVE THRU ONLY

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