

Pope Francis laments “weeds of suspicion”

The pontiff pondered and prayed about obstacles to Christian unity during his recent visit to Greece and Cyprus. Page 11



The CSA at work Page 3
Lights in Laurie. Page 4
Preparing, giving thanks . . . Page 5
A time to remember Page 7
Reconciliation services . . . Page 8
Shopping in Paris Page 12

The CATHOLIC MISSOURIAN

December 10, 2021 • Vol. 65 No. 12

Newspaper of the Diocese of Jefferson City

Over 300 from diocese converge at Catholic Youth Conference



Decked in distinctive hats, helmets, shields and other distinctive “swag,” young members of Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Lake Ozark and their adult chaperones gather inside the massive venue for this year’s National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis. The theme for this year’s event was “Aflame!” — from Jesus’s stated intention of setting the world on fire with His love. — Photo from the Our Lady of the Lake, Lake Ozark, Missouri Facebook page

By Jay Nies

Marley Corpe and a group of friends new and old were out getting lunch during this year’s National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis.

They came upon a bride-to-be and her attendants lining up for a photo.

“I went over and said, ‘I don’t know you, but would you like me to pray for you?’” Marley recalled with delight.

The bride said yes.

“So our whole little group that had gone to get lunch prayed with her,” said Marley.

The bride cried with joy and the teens wound up in some of her wedding-day photos.

This is not the kind of thing Marley would have done before.

“It just caught me by surprise that it was easy to do in that moment,” she recalled. “I started thinking, ‘Maybe this is what I was supposed to be doing all the time.’”

That was just one of the opportunities the 12,000 young people who attended this year’s NCYC were given to see the big picture and have all the pieces fall into place.

The three-day event for high school age Catholics combined fun and fellowship with intense worship experiences and learning opportunities.

The theme was “Aflame,” pointing to Jesus’s announcement that “I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!” (Luke 12:49)

“It’s all about the Holy Spirit igniting our passion for God and stirring the Pentecost flame that sets the world on fire,” Thomas Peuster, a member of St. Brendan Parish in Mexico, stated while taking a break from NCYC activities.

Thomas, a Mexico High School

See NCYC, page 15

Missouri pro-lifers pray confidently for successful outcome of Mississippi case

By Jay Nies

Hopeful vigilance pervaded a prayerful rally outside the Missouri Supreme Court Building Dec. 1.

It was the day oral arguments were presented before the U.S. Supreme Court in a case that could shape the battle over legalized abortion for years to come.

“This rally and this prayer vigil today is all about those precious children who are such a gift from the Lord,” stated Kathy Forck, the rally’s emcee. “And we pray that abortion will end, and please God, let it end soon!”

The nation’s highest court will rule next spring on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, which involves a Mississippi law that outlaws most elective abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

Allowing the law to stand would significantly weaken the Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* decisions that legalized abortion-on-demand throughout the United States.

About 100 people attended the rally in Jefferson City, organized by a Missouri pro-life coalition known as Team PLAY, which stands for prayer, legislation, action and “you, the people of Missouri.”

“Our motto is that when all of God’s children PLAY together, abortion will end,” said Mrs. Forck.

Speakers ranged from federal and state officials and staff members to lobbyists, activists and clergy.

All found hope in the direction the two hours of oral arguments before the Supreme Court justices had taken that morning.

Father Anthony Viviano, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Westphalia and St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Folk, who is also the Jefferson City diocese’s moderator for pro-life ministry, led the opening prayer.

See RALLY, page 14

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12/10/21

Pray for deceased priests

Dec. 9 — Fr. Thomas L. Waickman, St. Joseph, Louisiana; and Mary Queen of Peace, Clarksville (2010)

Dec. 13 — Fr. Edwin J. Cole, St. Patrick, Laurie (2009)

Dec. 14 — Fr. Joseph W. Starmann, Our Lady of the Snows, Mary's Home (2011)

Dec. 16 — Msgr. Edward E. Connolly, Holy Rosary, Monroe City (1973)

Fr. Patrick Dolan honored in Palmyra

Dwayne Goodwin of the Order of Secular Franciscans, a member of St. Joseph Parish in Palmyra, present Father Patrick Dolan with a gift on behalf of the Hispanic communities he serves in the northeastern part of the diocese, during the Spanish-language Mass on Nov. 6 in St. Joseph Church. Fr. Dolan celebrated his 50th priestly anniversary earlier this year.



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Chancery Closing

The Chancery offices in the Alphonse J. Schwartz Memorial Catholic Center will be closed for the following holy days and holidays: Dec. 24 and 27 for Christmas, and Dec. 31 and Jan. 3 for New Years.

Newspaper schedule

The Catholic Missourian will have a special publication schedule for the Christmas Season.

The final print edition of 2021 will be dated Dec. 17.

The first print edition of 2022 will be dated Jan. 7.

Jonesburg, Wellsville, Montgomery City Masses

The following are the new weekend Mass times for St. Patrick Parish in Jonesburg, Immaculate Conception Parish in Montgomery City, and Church of the Resurrection Parish in Wellsville:

•**Jonesburg:** Sunday at 8 a.m., St. Patrick Church

•**Montgomery City:** Sunday at 10 a.m., Immaculate Conception Church

•**Wellsville:** Saturday at 5:30 p.m., Church of the Resurrection

Brunswick Saturday Mass

The Saturday Vigil Mass in St. Boniface Church in Brunswick is now offered at 4:15 p.m.

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The Catholic Missourian

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

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Nativity at the Capitol

DATE: December 16
TIME: 11 am - 3 pm

A live Nativity scene and Christmas program featuring 13 local schools and bands will be featured at a Happy Birthday Jesus/Nativity at the Capitol from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 16, inside the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City.

There will also be another full-size Nativity scene outside at the Capitol, and several schools and bands will perform there.

Inside schedule: St. Peter Interparish School pre-kindergarten in Jefferson City at 11 a.m.; St. Martin School in St. Martins at 11:15 a.m.; St. Joseph Cathedral School in Jefferson City at 11:40 a.m.; Immaculate Conception School in Jefferson City at noon; Calvary Lutheran School in Jefferson City at 12:15 p.m.; St. Joseph School in Westphalia at 12:30 p.m.; Our Lady of the Snows School in Mary's Home at 12:45 p.m.; St. Stanislaus School in Wardsville at 1 p.m.; Immanuel Lutheran School in Honey Creek at 1:15 p.m.; St. Peter Interparish School fifth grade in Jefferson City at 1:30 p.m.; St. Francis Xavier School in Taos at 2 p.m.; Cole County R-5 School in Eugene at 2:20 p.m.; Helias Catholic High School in Jefferson City at 2:40 p.m.

Outside schedule: St. Martin School in St. Martins at 11 a.m.; St. Joseph Cathedral School in Jefferson City at 11:15 a.m.; St. Joseph School in Westphalia at noon; Immaculate Conception School in Jefferson City at 12:20 p.m.; Immanuel Lutheran School in Honey Creek at 12:45 p.m.; St. Peter Interparish School fifth grade at 1 p.m.; Our Lady of the Snows School in Mary's Home at 1:15 p.m.; St. Francis Xavier School in Taos at 1:30 p.m.; Helias Catholic High School in Jefferson City at 1:45 p.m.

For information, contact Judy Bax at 573-690-1218 or judy1218@centurylink.net.

Catholic Stewardship Appeal: Gratitude for past pledges, hope for continued support

By Jay Nies

As the new Liturgical Year begins with this Advent season, the people entrusted with various aspects of diocesan ministries are expressing gratitude for all who support the Catholic Stewardship Appeal (CSA).

The CSA helps pay for diocesan services that directly benefit parishes, their members and the larger communities they serve.

“A key part of what we do here in the Chancery offices is to help equip our parishes,” stated Maureen Quinn, diocesan director of youth ministry and religious education. “We’re assisting the parishes in promoting lifelong discipleship by providing these opportunities and support in their mission.”

“That also goes for the domestic Church — the family home,” she noted. “We’re helping parishes support families in the important work of bringing their children up in the faith.”

Evangelizing young people

Mrs. Quinn is pleased to be able to help parishes in new ways to lead young people to Christ through an ever-changing landscape and culture.

“The concrete, foundational truth that the Church has been teaching and upholding

for 2,000 years — that never changes,” she emphasized. “But the way that we share that has necessarily evolved throughout time. And part of what we do as a diocese is to make sure that we are evolving, too.”

Some of the most popular youth evangelization tools that are available in this diocese are the summer camps for young people.

Mrs. Quinn and her staff help coordinate and promote these events

“One of the greatest successes in our diocese right now is our summer camps,” she said.

About 30 high school girls attended Camp Siena and about 30 high school boys attended Camp Maccabee this year.

A committee of people involved in ministering to young people is in the process of examining these camps in light of evolving needs and societal trends.

“Moving forward, all of our camps will have a united theme,” Mrs. Quinn noted. “And possibly the biggest development, we’re adding a middle school camp to spark the joy of faith early on, that will grow into the high school opportunities.”

The basis of all of these is the call to holiness that every Catholic receives at baptism. From that flows all of the more specific callings in the Church, known as vocations.

“With these camps, that’s the focus: the call to live out holiness in every aspect of their life. The relationships they foster become Christian friendships that help build one another up for the kingdom of God.”

Similarly, the diocesan youth ministry staff works with par-

She also convened a free workshop in person and online this fall for parish youth ministers and directors of religious education (DREs).

“The topic was discipleship,” she stated. “We also talked about how ministry has changed since the pandemic, as well as how to provide quality retreats for young people.”

Preparing for marriage, family life

Mindful that Christian marriages and families are the primary

In about eight months’ time, the Marriage Ministries program of the diocese has provided that training to nearly all of the active priests and deacons of the diocese, along with 180 lay individuals who will serve as marriage preparation facilitators.

“So now they’ll be working more closely together in preparing couples for marriage,” said Deacon Enrique Castro, executive director of faith formation. “This is a good example of what co-responsibility among the clergy and the laity looks like,” referring to one of the priorities in the diocesan Pastoral Plan.

Preparation also includes closer coordination with the parishes, the diocese, the Pre-Cana and Engaged Encounter marriage preparation programs and the people who teach the various methods of Natural Family Planning (NFP) throughout the diocese.

“We’re working to integrate all these groups so we could all work together instead of just doing what we were doing separately,” Deacon Castro noted.

He noted that the new process also provides follow-up opportunities for couples long after they exchange their wedding vows.

“This follow-up is about providing them additional resources to enrich their marriage, whatever stage they’re at, such as raising children,” he said.

See CSA, page 18



Catholic STEWARDSHIP APPEAL

ishes to organize “*Tutus Tuus*” Catholic enrichment programs over the summer and bus trips to the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) every other November.

“It’s important to note that these are all opportunities for a spiritual encounter,” Mrs. Quinn noted. “They’re only a piece of the equation. We help provide these opportunities in order to support our parishes, so they can do a better job of carrying-out the day-to-day mission of ministering to their youth.”

This fall, Mrs. Quinn also visited the three Catholic Newman Centers in the diocese — in Columbia, Kirksville and Rolla — to help promote stronger connections between them and the rest of the diocese.

At the Rolla Newman Center, she gave a presentation on the New Evangelization.

“It’s important for the young people who are engaged in their faith at these universities to know that we as a diocese are there for them as they continue their lifelong journey of being Catholic,” she said.

building block for the Church and society, Bishop W. Shawn McKnight instituted a new, diocesan-wide process for preparing engaged couples for lifelong marriage focused on Christ.

The process calls for stronger collaboration between priests, deacons and laypeople in helping couples prepare to embrace the fullness of Christian marriage.

Everyone involved in the process needed special training.



Bishop McKnight's Calendar

DECEMBER

Dec 11 Mass, 8 am, Jefferson City Correctional Center; Cohort 2 Stewardship Meeting, 10 am, Chancery

Dec 12 Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 2 pm, Columbia

Dec 13 Catholic Rural Life Board Meeting, 10 am, Virtual

Dec 14 Very Reverend Deans Meeting, 11 am; College of Consultors Meeting, 12:30 pm; Presbyteral Council Meeting, 1 pm, Chancery; Presentation to SSM Health Executive Leadership, 7 pm, Mercy Conference and Retreat Center, St. Louis

Dec 19 St. Andrew Dinner for prospective seminarians, 5 pm, Bishop's Residence

Dec 21 Holy Hour and Vespers with seminarians (open to the public), 5 pm at the Cathedral; Bishop's Reception for priests and seminarians, 6pm, Chancery

Dec 24 Christmas Vigil Mass, Cathedral of St. Joseph, 4:30 pm, Jefferson City

Bishop McKnight's December prayer intention for our Local Church

For our children and youth: that the example of parents and other adults of the parish may foster a sense of openness to the Holy Spirit in their lives.

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

Para nuestros niños y jóvenes: que el ejemplo de los padres de familia y otros adultos de la parroquia pueda fomentar un sentido de apertura al Espíritu Santo en sus vidas.



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

Shrine in Laurie celebrates 40 years of Christmas lights

New administrator excited about new opportunities for outreach, growth

By Eddie O'Neill

There is a glow in the air at the National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church in Laurie.

It is not just radiating from the thousands of bulbs that now illuminate the 30-acre outdoor Shrine on the grounds of St. Patrick Church, but also from the warm smile of the shrine's new administrator Lori Lee.

"I arrived here in late August and have fallen in love with the place," said Ms. Lee, a native of St. Charles County in the St. Louis archdiocese. "Everyone is so joyful, helpful and active. For an older parish, everyone jumps in and lends a hand."

She said her position is a



The lights drive away the pending darkness at sunset during the Festival of Lights at the National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church, in Laurie. The focus is always on the Christmas story and the experience of the Holy Family.



am on it!"

This year marks the 40th year of the Shrine's Festival of Lights. This traditional lighting of the Shrine grounds, flag poles and of course, the rotating statue of the Blessed Mother which began Thanksgiving weekend will have a new twist this year thanks to Ms. Lee.

A special event will take place at the Shrine on Friday, Dec. 17.

"We are calling it the Festival of Lights Special Night," she told *The Catholic Missourian*. "It will be a community event where we will have caroling, hot chocolate, a bonfire to roast s'mores, and our gift shop will open for those last-minute shoppers."

She added that there will be cut-out, painted Nativity figures in which kids can poke their heads through and get a fun photo taken.

"We want to keep up the true meaning of Christmas in everything we do here," noted Ms. Lee. "That was the vision of Father Fred Barnett when he began this Shrine decades ago. We have a big Nativity set as

our focus, along with nature. We'll reserve the big Santa celebration for the town."

Work on installing the thousands of lights on the Shrine grounds began in early November.

The lights turn on around 5 p.m. each night and off at around 10 p.m., through the feast of the Baptism of our Lord on Sunday, Jan. 9.

The illumination includes a walkway of more than 100 lit flagpoles, reindeer and the 14-foot-tall, open-arms statue of Mary, Mother of the

Church.

Ms. Lee added that she hopes the Dec. 17 event will be just the start of another 40 years of Christmas traditions at the Shrine.

"When people come here, they note how calm and peaceful it is," she stated. "I think it is a hidden treasure that very few people know about. So, I want to get the word out and obviously bring more people here year round."

One of her ideas includes getting parishes from the diocese involved during this time

of year by having groups come and set up their own light displays around the grounds as the Christmas season approaches.

"Also, I certainly would welcome and help coordinate pilgrimage groups from around the diocese," she added. "Forty years is a big deal, and we are proud of that. Even more exciting is what we can accomplish in the next 40 years, as the possibilities are endless!"

thenationalshrineofmarymotherofthechurch.com



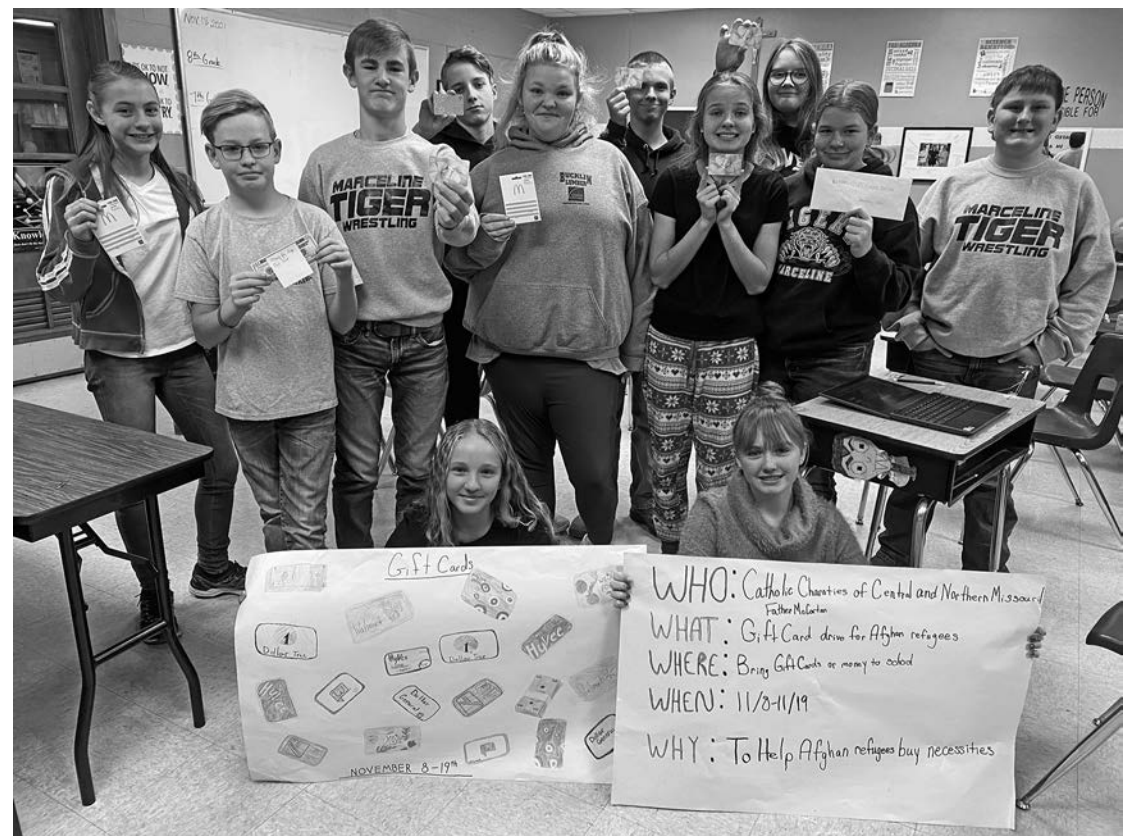
The illuminated Nativity scene is nestled in the woods on the grounds of the National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church during the Festival of Lights.

new one for the Shrine. In the past, the day-to-day business of the Shrine was handled by a cadre of volunteers.

Now they have their first full-time paid administrator, and she is full of creativity.

"When I arrived, I came with plenty of ideas for the Shrine, and they've been welcomed," she said with a big grin. "In fact they told me to keep the ideas coming, and I

Help for arriving Afghan refugees



The student council at Fr. McCartan Memorial School in Marcelline recently organized a gift card drive to benefit Refugee Services of Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri. The gift cards that people donated will be used to help Afghan refugees who are resettling in Missouri. — Photo by Jenna Akins

Advent: a season of thanksgiving and preparation

The pastor of Holy Family Parish in Hannibal and St. Joseph Parish in Palmyra and moderator for spiritual formation for the Jefferson City diocese offers the following message for Advent:

By Father Matthew Flatley

We are all very busy people living in very busy times. Or, are we?

Sometimes I wonder if we are not quite as busy as we all think we are.

Perhaps rather, in this ever advancing, and ever intrusive technological age, we have simply invented more and more new ways to distract ourselves.

Perhaps we just think we are very busy.

How do we best slow down? How do we search out and find gratitude, and then live in that kind of mindfulness. Can we be the sort of disciples who remember to turn around and thank our Lord?

In the midst of so much nonsense and misinformation on the internet, occasionally we come across a gem. I recently found one such gem on Facebook:

“Have you ever considered that God has fallen in love with you? He sends you flowers every spring. He sends you sunshine every morning.

Whenever you want to talk, He listens to you. He can live anywhere in the universe, but He chooses your heart.” (Kelly’s Treehouse on Facebook.)

Can it be possible for us to live with this kind of awareness? This kind of faith? This kind of gratitude?

Brothers and Sisters, because of advancements in social and physical sciences, we now know more about Sacred Scripture than we ever have. In a particular way, thanks to carbon testing, we are now able to date ancient artifacts. In this way, Scripture scholars tell us Jesus Christ was very fond of this saying, and He spoke quite often, “Those with ears ought to listen, those with eyes ought to see.”

Do you want to see and hear in this deeper way, especially as we prepare for Emmanuel in this holy Advent Season?

Now we must turn back to our Lord and ask Him to teach us to pray, so that we can search for this kind of faith, belief and gratitude ... for this kind of seeing and hearing!

We learn that in Luke’s and Matthew’s Gospel accounts, Christ teaches us our beloved “Lord’s Prayer.” The an-

The ancients call this “apophatic prayer,” which is “prayer without form.” In this way of prayer, we turn inwards, on the level of pure faith, trusting that God dwells within us, and in silence ... we surrender our wills to our Lord at the deepest level.

You could say that kataphatic prayer is speaking to our Lord, and apophatic prayer is listening to our Lord.

During this Advent Season, as we prepare the way for the Lord, as we strive to make straight the path of Christ to be born in our churches, our communities, our

families, and perhaps most of all ... in our hearts, we need both kinds of prayer.

This prayer with form, and this prayer without form, are the two banks, which carry this Mighty River of Grace.

In the midst of so much activity and busyness, remember to occasionally Be Still, and let the Lord find you. Then our lives can become a prayer of thanksgiving!



A family lights an Advent wreath at their Maryland home. Advent asks us to wait on the Lord. — CNS photo/Tom McCarthy Jr., Catholic Review

cients in our tradition call this kind of prayer “kataphatic prayer.” This Greek word means “prayer with form.” When we pray this way, we use words, symbols, thoughts and ideas.

However, we also recall that in Matthew’s Gospel, Christ teaches another way to pray. He instructs us, “But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father Who is in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you.” (Matthew 6:6)

Another successful free Thanksgiving meal in Camdenton



By Kris Pauls

The 16th annual free Thanksgiving Day dinner hosted by St. Anthony Parish in Camdenton was another success for Chris-



tian fellowship and gratitude.

More than 66 volunteers served over 340 meals to people who were alone, in need or looking for a place to eat or have a meal delivered on an important American holiday.

Meals were delivered to 36 households.

Many coats, hats, scarves,

mittens and gloves were received through the Knights of Columbus coat drive, with Stephen Neiger serving as chairman.

Parishioner Mike Casella started this tradition 16 years ago and continues to volunteer.

Kris Pauls is the current chairperson for the event.



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J.C. parishioner reflects on life as a musician, teacher, principal

By Joe Gamm

Juanita Kunzler coached, directed, performed and taught music for decades before she stepped away from the field last month.

No matter where her assignments took her, her parish leaders always seemed to find out about her talents and tap into them.

Now 83, Miss Kunzler took piano lessons while in eighth grade at St. Cecilia School in Meta.

A nun recognized young Juanita's talent and approached her.

"She said she thought I could do organ," Mrs. Kunzler recalled. "She said, 'We need somebody.' I didn't realize what I would get into."

Seventy years later, she feels the pull to continue. The Church still needs musicians, she explained.

"Even though I can still play — I can still do it — I'm old," she said Nov. 22. "I know we do need musicians at Immaculate Conception. It's all volunteer that's why I felt bad (about retiring)."

Seventy years have passed in heartbeats.

Mrs. Kunzler entered a religious community at age 20. She later left the order and married Donald Kunzler in 1971.

Mr. Kunzler, who always referred to Juanita as his bride, died in 2012.

No matter where she was, she remained dedicated to the Church and music.

As a religious sister, she was sent to different, sometimes exotic, places. One was the Island of St. Martin in the Caribbean.

Shortly after she arrived there, Church leaders asked her to take the musical reins from an older woman who was leaving.

How they found out about her musical background, Mrs. Kunzler wasn't certain. However, she found herself in charge of arranging music for a First Holy Communion celebration.

She set out to do her best. The production value the small church created, with professional camera lighting and music, was a little unnerving at first, she said.

"They played steel drums," Mrs. Kunzler recalled. "The melody blended, sort of (with traditional Church music)."

She always carried those experiences with her.

"It was exciting to help out," she said.

"The Caribbean was the most interesting place, I think, because of the music,"



Juanita Kunzler, who has served as principal of Immaculate Conception School in Jefferson City and as organist at Immaculate Conception Church, poses next to the piano she purchased with money earned from her first job as a teacher.

— Photo by Julie Smith, courtesy Jefferson City News Tribune

she stated. "Sometimes, with these steel bands, I was amazed at what they could do."

Mrs. Kunzler spent time in Las Cruces, New Mexico, about half an hour from El Paso, Texas, and the Mexico border.

"That was interesting," she said. "Their culture — their music — was a little different. I had to get used to that."

She served in many parishes in Missouri. Near St. Louis, she worked in Des Peres and Flint Hill.

She taught at St. Joseph

Cathedral School and St. Peter Interparish School in Jefferson City and at Our Lady of the Snows School in Mary's Home, where she was also principal.

She served as principal of Immaculate Conception School in Jefferson City for seven years.

"Every time I was teaching, I was the musician — I had to be the musician in addition to teaching," she said.

St. Theodore Parish in Flint Hill was so little, and the pastor was elderly, Mrs. Kunzler

recalled.

"He never turned the furnace on when we were going to church during the week," she explained. "We'd only be in there a half hour, and he didn't want to heat the whole church. So, it was freezing in there. My superior wanted to take the children in there to practice music and singing."

Her fingers were so stiff, she could hardly move them, let alone play.

The superior would hear Mrs. Kunzler's playing and ask if she were "playing in the cracks."

"She was thinking I was not playing very well. I wasn't," Mrs. Kunzler said.

Mrs. Kunzler always feels honored to play for people during their weddings or during funerals.

"That is probably one of the greatest honors," she said, "for a funeral — to play music to comfort people, do something that makes them hopeful."

This article and photo were published Nov. 28 in the Jefferson City News Tribune (news.tribune.com) and are republished here with permission.

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God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy, so that we may share His wisdom and become one with Him when He comes in glory, for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Candle, candle burning bright!



Members of St. Mary Parish in Milan gather around the giant Advent wreath on the parish grounds on Nov. 28, the First Sunday of Advent.

— Photo by Deacon John Weaver

Vienna parishioners gather for a meal to celebrate loved ones who died during the pandemic



LEFT: Names and photos of recently deceased parishioners adorn a table near the entrance to the Koerber Knights of Columbus Hall in Vienna during a Nov. 21 luncheon and celebration of life for the people of Visitation Parish who died during the pandemic and whose families could not have a proper funeral luncheon. **RIGHT:** People at the gathering bring friends and family members to mind during a time of grateful reminiscence before lunch was served.

— Photos by Jay Nies

“Let us console one another in the faith of Jesus Christ.”

By Jay Nies

Fellowship once taken for granted was in short supply at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to slow the spread of the virus.

Among the many things sacrificed for the common good was the chance to share warm memories over a meal after a loved-one’s passing.

So it stands to reason that members of Visitation Parish in Vienna had a lot of catching up to do during a recent Celebration of Life and carry-in luncheon to remember parishioners who had recently died.

“We want to welcome you and remember people that have left many memories with us,” said lifelong Visitation parishioner Nina Stratman, who coordinates funeral luncheons at the parish.

Framed photos of Sylvester Buschmann, David Deeken, Frances Kaiser, Joyce Laubert, Rosalie Leuthen, Emil Luebert, Jeff Nelson, Jim Redel, Virginia Redel, Catherine “Katie” Risse, David Schwartze, Frances Schwartze and LaVaughn Zimmer, who all passed away since the pandemic began, adorned a table near the entrance to the Koerber Knights of Columbus Hall.

There were also fall flowers, holy cards and programs from Funeral Masses.

Another table across the room bore a feast prepared by friends and family members of the day’s honorees.

Between the two tables, memories came to life.

“We need to recognize these people and think about all the good things that we enjoyed with them,” said Mrs. Stratman.

She got the reminiscing going with memories of several recently deceased parishioners and stories of their friendship and generous service.

Laughter soon filled the room as endearing phrases were repeated and quirky mannerisms recalled.

Sons, daughters, siblings, extended family members and lifelong friends drew ever-increasing relish from the recollections.

They expressed pride and gratitude for their loved ones’ accomplishments and personal contributions to who they and their parish and their community have become.

Many of the connections came back to worshipping together in church, volunteering in the rectory or school, and sharing games and meals in each other’s living rooms.

Father Basil Tigga, pastor of Visitation Parish and of Holy Guardian Angels Parish in Brinktown, St. Aloysius Parish in Argyle and the Chapel of St. Boniface in Koeltztown, concluded the first phase of the celebration with a prayer.

“Almighty God, we are here to remember and pray for all of our dear ones who have gone before us,” he prayed. “Bless all the family members. Keep them in good health and keep them close to You so that we

may always praise You, in this life and in the next.”

The camaraderie continued over warm plates of food. As one of the parishioners of beloved memory was fond of saying, “This gets better with

every bite. They don’t eat this good at the White House.”

Confident that they will one day be greeted by their loved ones at God’s heavenly banquet table, the participants in this tiny foretaste of that day

deemed it a rousing success and worthy of repeating sometime.

Afterward, Mrs. Stratman called to mind an observation one of her grandsons recently made to her: “We’re not just lucky, we’re very blessed!”

Cursillo Women’s Weekend #77 November 4-7, 2021 St. Pius X Church, Moberly



(First row) Rachelle Seibert; Allison Lupu; Lisa Berendzen; Mary Hill; Janet Brown, rectora; (second row) Mary Wideman; Carol Fay; Cristhia Castro; Columba Stoneking; Cathy Wilcox; (third row) Julie Fuemmeler; Maria Lacey; Jane Stratman; Jennifer Wood; Tricia Vogt; Jackie Crider; (fourth row) Father Daniel Lueckenotte, spiritual director; Susan Stolwyk; Diana Jones; Deacon Mark Aulbur, assistant spiritual director; Regina Summers; Beth Ann Keener; Cathy Korthas; Debbie Brucks.

— Photo by Maggie Johnston

QUESTION CORNER

Accepting Jesus as savior / Why baptize a baby?

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service



ject. (Indiana)

Q. Growing up as a Baptist, for us to be “saved” (gain entrance into heaven), we had to “invite Jesus into our heart and accept Him as our personal Savior” — which I have done. I’ve been a Catholic now for 10 years, and when I attend Mass, I’ve never really heard anything about being “saved” or how to gain entrance into heaven. I would appreciate your shedding some light on this subject.

A. It is true that Paul says in Romans that “if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (10:9). But that has never been viewed by the Catholic Church as a one-time act that guarantees entrance into heaven.

There are a number of other scriptural passages that indicate, instead, that eternal salvation is based on a lifetime of choices.

In Colossians 1:21-23, for example, Paul writes: “And you who were once alienated and hostile in mind because of evil deeds, He has now reconciled in His fleshly body through His death, to present you holy, without blemish, and irreproachable before Him, provided that you persevere in the faith, firmly grounded, stable, and not shifting from the hope of the Gospel which you heard.”

That “proviso clause” indicates the Catholic belief that heaven is won by a lifetime of choices and not by a single act. Salvation is not guaranteed by a decision we have made in the past. We continue to have free will and retain the ability to turn away from God if we choose to do so.

Q. Our son and his wife-to-be are not practicing Catholics. They have a little girl, now 20 months old, who needs to be baptized. How do we as parents approach the subject — without turning them against the faith completely or against us? (Regina, Saskatchewan)

A. Let me say first that I admire very much your love for Catholicism and your desire to pass on the benefits of the Catholic faith to your granddaughter. My goal is the same as yours: to bring her parents back to regular practice of the faith so they can offer strong religious support to their child.

The wording of your question, though, may be significant. You say that your granddaughter “needs to be baptized.” Is it possible that you think that is her only chance for heaven? I raise the question because there are some people who believe that.

So let me clarify that first. In 2007, the Vatican’s International Theological Commission, with the approval of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, said that the concept of limbo reflected “an unduly restrictive view of salvation” and that the mercy of God offers good reason to hope that babies who die without being baptized can go to heaven.

Now, on to your question. Canon 868 of the Church’s *Code of Canon Law* states that “for an infant to be baptized licitly ... there must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion.”

Right now, as you describe the situation, that sounds doubtful. If you see an opportunity in a quiet way to speak to your son about the religious path he might be considering for their daughter, then do it.

See FR. DOYLE, page 19

Papal Audience

December 1, 2021



Dear Brothers and Sisters:

In our continuing catechesis on St. Joseph, we now reflect on St. Matthew’s description of Joseph as both “a just man” and as “the husband of Mary.” As a devout son of Israel, Joseph willingly submitted to the requirements of the Law and its precepts concerning marriage.

Having learned that Mary was already with child, out of love and regard for her Joseph sought to spare her the humiliation of a public separation. Then, in a dream, Joseph learned from an angel that it was right that he should marry Mary, since she had conceived her Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. By God’s providence, Joseph came to a deeper understanding of divine justice and its authentic demands. Joseph and Mary’s openness to God’s saving plan brings their love to a maturity expressed in the virtues of chastity, fidelity, respect and humility. Far from restricting our freedom, these virtues in fact give our love direction and endurance. In this sense, Joseph and Mary can serve as an example not only to young people engaged to be married, but to all of us, who also in the midst of life’s inevitable challenges, are called to discover the true joy and freedom that come from trusting in God’s just and providential concern for our lives.

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s audience, especially the groups from the United States of America. I pray that each of you, and your families, may experience a blessed Advent, in preparation for the coming of the newborn Saviour of the world. May God bless you!

More Advent reconciliation services

Advent is a good time for an examination of conscience and to receive the sacrament of reconciliation in preparation for the celebration of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Here is a partial list of Advent communal reconciliation services in the Jefferson City diocese. Most services will include a short prayer service followed by individual confessions. Extra priests from neighboring parishes are typically present to help out. Additional services will be added to the online version of this article at cathmo.com and to the diocesan calendar at diojeffcity.org/events as they are publicized.

Boonville — Thursday, Dec. 16 at 7 pm, Ss. Peter & Paul Church

Brookfield — Sunday, Dec. 12 at 5 pm, Immaculate Conception Church

Brunswick — Monday, Dec. 13 at 6 pm, St. Boniface Church

Fayette — Tuesday, Dec. 14 at 7 pm, St. Joseph Church

Jefferson City — Advent Holy Hour and confessions, Tuesday, Dec. 14 at 7 pm, St. Peter Church; Thursday, Dec. 16 at 7 pm, Immaculate Conception Church

Macon — Sunday, Dec. 15 at 7 pm, Immaculate Conception Church

Marceline — Thursday, Dec. 16 at 6 pm, St. Bonaventure Church

Mexico — Friday, Dec. 17 at 6 pm, St. Brendan Church

Monroe City — Tuesday, Dec. 21 at 6:30 pm, Holy Rosary Church

St. Anthony — Wednesday, Dec. 15 at 7 pm, St. Anthony of Padua Church

St. Clement — Thursday, Dec. 16, at 6:30 pm, St. Clement Church

St. Elizabeth — Friday, Dec. 10 at 6:30 pm, St. Lawrence Church

St. Robert — Sunday, Dec. 12 at 3 pm, St. Robert Bellarmine Church

Salisbury — Friday, Dec. 17 at 6 pm, St. Joseph Church

Sedalia — Sunday, Dec. 19 at 4 pm, St. Patrick Chapel

Taos — Monday, Dec. 13 at 6 pm and Tuesday, Dec. 21 at 10 am, St. Francis Xavier Church

Tipton — Wednesday, Dec. 15 at 7 pm, St. Andrew Church

Wardville — Thursday, Dec. 16 at 6 pm, St. Stanislaus Church

Wien — Wednesday, Dec. 15 at 6 pm, St. Mary of the Angels Church



Trading Ordinary Times for Advent

By Lucia A. Silecchia



One year, I was standing in a checkout line behind two women deep in conversation. I could not help overhearing that one was recently widowed and struggling to adjust to this new season of life. Most of their conversation, however, was drowned out by the lilting strains of “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year” playing over the loudspeakers. That moment of odd juxtaposition reminded

me that, for many, the time between Thanksgiving and Christmas holds a measure of sorrow.

That may be particularly true after the past two years.

Like the stranger shopping with me, many are dreading their first Christmas without a loved one. Others are facing their second, or ninth, or twenty-seventh Christmas without a loved one when the blessed numbness of the first year has passed and the reality of loss has truly sunk in. There are some who expect with dread that this may be the last Christmas they will share with a suffering family member or friend. There are some passing the first season when an adult child

will not be able to come home. This may be the first Christmas away from the family home because downsizing or simple economics mean the home was sold and the large table that had long been the setting for family feasts is no more. It may be the season when a deployment keeps a member of the military away from home — knowing he or she will miss a child’s first Christmas or a grandparent’s last.

This may be the first Christmas season that the elders of a family, with both relief and regret, surrender hosting duties to a younger generation — or the first time that the family chef can no longer make a cherished traditional dish.

This may be the season when images of joyful families hurt the hearts of those whose families have borne the pain of divorce and estrangement. The centrality of children in this season centered on the birth of a child can take a toll on those who ache to have a child and do not or cannot.

Some face the season in poverty, knowing they cannot give their loved ones grand tokens of their affection and fearing that they will disappoint those nearest and dearest. Others have seen some manifestation of a dark side to human nature in this past year — and what

See SILECCHIA, page 18

An Advent plea for immigration reform

By Hosffman Ospino
Catholic News Service



How long? Until when? These questions are common during Advent as Christians reflect on the meaning of the final coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ. From the depths of our hearts we proclaim, “Mara-natha,” come, Lord Jesus.

As we wait with vigilant hope, our lives unfold in the here and now of history. We must raise families, study, work, pay bills and make sure that we all live well. This also entails a concern for the good of others.

Hearing the questions “How long? Until when?” on the lips of millions of immigrants in our nation who long to be affirmed, seek to regularize their migratory status, and hope to reunite with their loved ones or remove obstacles to thrive as part of the American dream, calls for some pause.

This is what Advent invites us to do: Take pause. We pause from the hastiness of our lives to reflect and listen. We pause to ponder how we live in relationship with God and others.

As I take pause this Advent, I reflect particularly on the lives of the nearly 45 million immigrants living in our country, about 13.7% of the entire U.S. population: women and men, moms and dads, sisters and brothers, neighbors who live among us and worship with us in our faith communities.

To speak of immigrants also implies speaking of their spouses, children, relatives, friends and coworkers. Their lives are profoundly intertwined with ours.

I commend the Center for Migration Studies in New York, established by the Scalabrinians and run with a profound Catholic spirit, for their ad-

vocacy and commitment to providing data that can help us understand the reality of all migrants in the United States and throughout the world.

Looking at one of the center’s data tools, we learn that as of 2019 there were about 11 million undocumented immigrants living with us. Nearly 75% come from Latin America and the Caribbean, thus we can safely assume that most are Roman Catholic.

About 58% have lived in this country more than 10 years; 23.3% more than 20 years. About 26% arrived prior to the age of 16. Nearly 60% completed high school, 33% have some college education and 18.3% completed a bachelor’s degree or higher. About 78.3% are older than 25.

Attention to this particular sector of the immigrant population is crucial since they are among the most vulnerable in our midst. Their poverty rates are high; about half do not have health insurance.

How long and until when must our immigrant sisters and brothers, especially those in irregular migratory status, live under the shadows of our legal and socioeconomic systems?

Before anyone retorts saying that “they can go back home,” please read the statistics above: The U.S. is their home! They are part of who we are.

We need immigration reforms that lead to legal migratory status regularization, pathways to citizenship for young immigrants currently protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a more efficient system to reunite families and to stop incarcerating immigrants seeking a better life, among others.

A new election cycle approaches and our polarized leaders seem to be getting ready to play political football with the lives of immigrants and refugees — again. Catholics should hold our ground and denounce that practice. We must refuse to participate in

such games.

Catholics should be at the forefront of a movement calling for serious immigration reform. Let us heed the voice of Pope Francis who incessantly calls us to welcome Christ in

the immigrant and refugee. Take a pause this Advent and think about what you can do.

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

REFLECTION

Weight of the wait

By Mark Saucier

As kids, we had Advent wreaths made of coat hangers, cedar greens and nubby candles my mother refused to toss as long as there was some light left in them.

Advent means “coming,” but it was about waiting. Sure, there was the waiting of the Jewish people for a Messiah. And the waiting in preparation for God to once again be born unto us.

But there was something else. As the candles dwindled with each lighting, and the cedar dried, we were nearing the end to our waiting.

We were getting closer, not just to the birth of Jesus, but to presents, visits by cousins, festive meals and a break from school.

We outgrew that, but along the way, we’ve also lost that sense of waiting and the slowness of time that accompanies it.

Now the Advent candles burning are a searing reminder that the clock is ticking. We have one less day to shop, wrap and bake.

Advent may be about waiting, but a fast-approaching Christmas leaves little time for it.

Now we live in a world of express lanes, instant messaging, same-day deliveries, and snap judgments. Our fast food is not just the speed with which it’s ready, but the pace with which it is consumed.

We need waiting, a deep intentional waiting: not the pause of thumbing through our phones in idle time, but a prayerful pulling back, allowing God to penetrate the force shield of busyness and distraction that surrounds us.

Waiting is a practice so important that the liturgical calendar devotes four weeks to it. The waiting of Advent is not just a pre-Christmas tradition, but training for a spiritual posture we need all year.

It is nothing new. Sarah had to wait 25 years for her promised son. The Israelites waited 40 years in the desert. Jacob, Joseph and Job all had to wait.

It was never passive waiting. It was an active surrender to God’s will in their lives and a formation of what that will would demand.

Whether lost and confused or certain of our next step, we need to learn to wait on God, to live in that tension between doing and waiting.

At 18 or at 80, we wait for a vision of who we are in the world, of who we are in God.

And as the Psalms attest, God does not disappoint.

“I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry.”

Benedictine abbey in rural Missouri draws growing number of young women

By Karen Pulfer Focht
Catholic News Service

Gower, Missouri

Breaking the silence, the sisters breathed deeply. Then with ever so much control, they started singing in perfect unison.

Without a word being spoken, the sisters intuitively knew what Mother Cecilia, their prioress, was calling forth from them.

Sweet harmonies filled the church as these Benedictine nuns recorded their latest album. The hand-painted arches of their church resonated with the sound so beautifully that it fell gently on a listener's ears.

These are not just any singing nuns. These nuns are recording artists. These are chart-topping nuns, and it's been more than three years since their last album.

The new CD, which is their 10th, was released Oct. 26.

They have had four albums that topped the charts so far, said Sr. Scholastica — “Advent,” “Angels and Saints,” “Lent” and “Easter.” We were also the first nuns to win Billboard's Classical Artist of the Year Award in 2013.”

Every sister at the Abbey of Our Lady of Ephesus learns to sing. It is an integral part of life for the Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles, a cloistered order of nuns living by the ancient Rule of St. Benedict in Gower in rural Missouri in the Kansas City-



Mother Cecilia, center, prioress of the Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles in Gower, Mo., and her sisters listen to the playback of her recording session for “Christ the King at Ephesus,” inside the monastery Sept. 23, 2021. This is the nuns’ first album in three years. — CNS photo/Karen Pulfer Focht

St. Joseph diocese.

The lifestyle here may date from medieval times, but young women are flocking to this monastery. Candidates seeking a life of union with God, in prayer, are between 17 and 30 and they come from all over America. Foreign candidates have been unable to obtain their visas.

They leave behind a world driven by pop culture and enter a world guided by the wisdom of St. Benedict.

It also is a humble life. These young women spend time in a lovely orchard — filled with fruits and nuts. They milk cows by hand, gather eggs, make cheese and pull potatoes from the dirt. Self-sustainability is an ideal passed down from St. Benedict.

They believe farm work keeps you dependent on God and that such work is conducive to simple prayer.

Sr. Scholastica added that

as the grounds they work become more cultivated and civilized, they are literally working out their salvation. “We hope the ground of our own soul also becomes more cultivated and something beautiful for God.”

The chanting and the musical life inside the monastery are a large draw. The monastery has grown so fast that they've had to split up and expand. “When the family grows large enough that we begin to lose sense of the family, it is time for some “repotting,” transferring portions to new soil, Sr. Scholastica explained.

So, some of the sisters have moved and have established another community in Ava, Missouri, where they have purchased 350 acres. Catholic families wanting to live near the monastery have already purchased property from the sisters.

Next spring, the Benedictines of Mary plan to break ground on a new large monastery and a church.

Eleven young women are new to the Gower abbey, hailing from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Texas, Idaho, New Jersey, Georgia, Ohio, Indiana, South Carolina, Kansas and Missouri.

Two of the young women already have blood sisters at

the abbey, which will bring them up to six sets of sister-sisters. The three who are entering at Ava are from Vermont, Kentucky and Minnesota. They will bring their numbers up to 60 total in both houses.

A few “pre-postulants,” have been visiting recently and are now studying their life more closely with the possibility of staying.

If, after further observation, the community decides they are a good fit, they become postulants, take on the black dress and short veil, and then they address them as “Sister.”

The two groups of nuns have missed each other terribly, not just in day-to-day life but in song. Their separation prevented them from putting out another album. They tried to recreate their sound with some of the new sisters, but it just didn't work.

Mother Cecilia asked the superior of the Ava house if she could spare three sisters for a short time so that they could reunite at the abbey and record together again. When the sisters from Ava showed up, they arrived in time for night prayers and snuck into the choir stalls so that when the rest of the sisters processed into the church, it was a huge surprise.

It was a family reunion.

“Once the Ava sisters were here, we were back in our recording element. It was like old times” said Sr. Scholastica.

In mid-September the veterans of recording from both houses, along with a few new voices, came together to form something of a “Dream Team.”

It has been a tradition for Mother Cecilia to write at least one original song for each CD. In hopes to put out an album this fall, she quietly waited for an idea.

Just the day before the recording was to start, she was divinely inspired and composed original music, setting it to a poem written by Sister Mary Wilhelmina, their late foundress. She died at age 95 in 2019. The sisters quickly learned their parts for the new song, “Hymn to Christ the King,” to record it live in the church.

For two days, with afternoon sun streaming into the church, the sisters stood in a circle beneath a statue of Mary singing their hearts out until sunset.

Seeking perfection, each time a throat cleared, a shoe squeaked or the walls cracked in the background, their brows would furrow. Every little sound was coming through to the recording engineer. They would have to start over.

At times they would take a break, walk the grounds and rest their voices. Then as they came together again and started fresh, they'd get a perfect take, they'd giggle, nod and smile because they knew — yes, that was the best take!

“We draw our strength from being set apart from the world, with God and the sisterly support of one another” said Sr. Scholastica, “the music seems to be a perfect means to reach out to the world that we are always holding up in prayer. There is no compromise of our life, but we can share what we have, and we are happy to do so.”

A video of the nuns recording “Hymn To Christ the King” inside their monastery in rural Missouri can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/2ZOw0jB>.

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Pope asks pardon for sins that drove Catholic, Orthodox apart

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Athens, Greece

Like St. John Paul II before him, Pope Francis apologized to members of the Orthodox Church of Greece for the ways Catholics over the centuries had offended them, and he told Catholic leaders that they must embrace their minority status with humility.

“Here, today, I feel the need to ask anew for the forgiveness of God and of our brothers and sisters for the mistakes committed by many Catholics,” Pope Francis told Orthodox Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens and all Greece.

Under heavy gray skies, Pope Francis made his way Dec. 4 from the Vatican nunciature to the archbishop’s office in Athens’ old city. He was driven to the nearby Catholic Cathedral Basilica of St. Dionysius the Areopagite only after his meeting with Archbishop Ieronymos, the spiritual leader of the majority of Greek Christians.

While Catholics and Orthodox have the same roots in the preaching of St. Paul and the teaching of the early Church theologians and first ecumenical councils, “tragically, in later times we grew apart,” the pope said.

“Worldly concerns poisoned us, weeds of suspicion increased our distance and we ceased to nurture communion,” Pope Francis said. “Shamefully — I acknowledge this for the Catholic Church — actions and decisions that had little or nothing to do with Jesus and the Gospel — but were instead marked by a thirst for advantage and power — gravely weakened our communion.”

Pope Francis acknowledged there are some Christians who are not thrilled about ecumenism and its efforts to pray and work for the restoration of Christian unity and, in fact, as the pope arrived at the archbishop’s residence, an elderly Orthodox priest repeatedly shouted, “Pope, you’re a heretic.”

But convinced that communion is the path willed by Jesus Who prayed His followers would be one, the pope told the Orthodox archbishop: “Let us fearlessly help one another

to worship God and to serve our neighbor, without proselytism and in full respect for the freedom of others.”

To those who would object that evangelization is more central to the Church’s mission than ecumenism is, the pope replied, “How can we testify before the world to the harmony of the Gospel, if we Christians remain separated? How can we proclaim the love of Christ Who gathers the nations, if we ourselves are not united?”

And while the Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue continues to discuss differences between the churches, their faithful have much they can and must do together, the pope said.

“Even now,” he said, “the Spirit urges us to care for the weak and poor and to bring their cause, paramount in the eyes of God, to the world’s attention.”

Archbishop Ieronymos, who is three months younger than Pope Francis, told him that at this stage — the pope will be 85 Dec. 17 — they basically have lived their lives and “enjoyed the beauties of God in nature and the environment. But what does the future hold in store for the younger generations?”

The COP26 conference on climate change was a big disappointment, the archbishop said, and he asked Pope Francis to join him in condemning the compromises made in Glasgow that failed to make a real difference to reduce carbon emissions.

Recalling how they visited the Greek island of Lesbos together in 2016, the archbishop told the pope, “It is such a relief to see your great sensitivity to the refugee and migrant issue.”

Praising Greek citizens who have come to the aid of refugees and thanking the pope for helping transfer migrants from Greece to Italy, Archbishop Ieronymos said it is time “to sound the alarm” and work “to stop the migration flow,” which, he said, is exploited by some countries and makes life difficult for the migrants, especially if they move to a country where there are few other people of their race or religion.

Going from the archbish-



Pope Francis kisses the encolpion of Orthodox Archbishop Chrysostomos II of Cyprus during a meeting in Nicosia Dec. 3, 2021. An encolpion is an episcopal pectoral medallion with an icon. — CNS photo/Vatican Media

op’s residence to the Catholic urged Catholics in Greece to be humble, patient, holy and

helpful as they lived their faith as a tiny minority in the country.

“Being a small church makes us an eloquent sign of the Gospel, of the God proclaimed by Jesus Who chooses the poor and the lowly, Who changes history by the simple acts of ordinary people,” the pope told them.

“As Church, we are not called to have the spirit of conquest and victory, impressive numbers or worldly grandeur. All this is dangerous. It can tempt us to triumphalism,” the pope told them. Instead, “we are asked to take our inspiration from the mustard seed, which appears insignificant, but grows slowly and quietly.”

In Greece, Pope expresses concern for democracy’s decline in Europe

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Athens, Greece

From Aristotle to St. Gregory Nazianzus, and from the Acropolis to the olive tree, Pope Francis drew from Greek history and culture to appeal for a faith that is lived in good works and a politics that truly seeks the common good.

Arriving in Greece from Cyprus Dec. 4, Pope Francis went directly from the airport to meetings with Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and then a large group of political, civic and cultural representatives.

“Here democracy was born,” he told the representatives. “Yet we cannot avoid noting with concern how today — and not only in Europe — we are witnessing a retreat from democracy.”

“Democracy requires participation and involvement on the part of all; consequently, it demands hard work and patience,” he said. “It is complex, whereas authoritarianism is peremptory, and populism’s easy answers appear attractive.”

A political stance that seeks only popularity and easy answers is not worthy either of the description politics or of a place in a democracy, Pope Francis said.

“Politics is, and ought to be in practice, a good thing, as the supreme responsibility of citizens and as the art of the common good,” he said. “So that the good can be truly shared, particular attention — I would even say priority — should be given to the weaker strata of society.”

Speaking before the pope, Sakellaropoulou told him the Christian churches’ preaching and work for “unity and concord” and their concern for migrants and refugees, the poor, the environment and all who are suffering because of COVID-19 are important not just for believers.

“It is directly related to the politics of care and humanity and paves the way for peaceful coexis-

tence and prosperity for all of us,” she said. “The safeguarding of human dignity and social cohesion is the challenge that gives meaning to the relationship between ecclesiastical and secular authorities in a global society with inexhaustible potential, but also with painful contradictions.”

Pope Francis agreed. The history, philosophy and faith of the Greeks throughout the centuries urge people to look “toward the heights, toward God,” but also to look across the seas to recognize themselves as citizens not only of their cities or country, but of the world.

While setting aside individual or even national interests on behalf of the common good of all can sound utopic, the pope said, it is humanity’s only concrete hope.

Arriving in Athens just a few weeks after the annual olive harvest, the pope noted the tree is common on every shore of the Mediterranean and, like after the great biblical flood, can be “the symbol of recovery, of the strength to begin anew by changing our way of life, renewing our proper relationship with the Creator, other creatures and all creation.”

Migrants and refugees are a special group of people that need particular care now — and a greater helping hand from all European countries, not just Greece, the pope said. But many European countries, “prey to forms of nationalistic self-interest,” refuse to help and make the European Union appear to be losing its identity as “an engine of solidarity.”

“I would like to encourage once again a global, communitarian vision with regard to the issue of migration, and to urge that attention be paid to those in greatest need, so that, in proportion to each country’s means, they will be welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated, in full respect for their human rights and dignity,” he said.

See POPE, page 18

Paris youth fighting hunger

Confirmation candidates from the Mission of St. Frances Cabrini in Paris shop for food for the local food bank and for Christmas is Caring with the \$790 they worked to collect for their service project. Parishioners Jason and Katie Dodge led the service projects for the confirmation class.



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St. Robert Bellarmine parishioners bring Advent to Christmas festivities



LEFT: A young visitor has successfully ringed one of the Advent candles. **RIGHT:** St. Robert Bellarmine Altar and Rosary Society President Alisha Workman, Tori Rathert, and Charline O'Neill have the booth ready.

By Diana Bentele

Waynesville

Each year, on a typically-cold night in early December, the Waynesville courthouse square turns into a winter wonderland called “Christmas on the Square,” where families can come and get a cup of hot chocolate or cider, take a hay ride, and play games — almost all for free.

This year, the Altar and Rosary Society of St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in St. Robert used the opportunity to make the holiday season brighter for children of all ages while sharing an important part of this season for our faith: the Advent wreath.

Many ladies who could not attend assisted with candy donations and set-up resources making the evening a success.

The ladies set up a tent to delineate the space, visited to spread cheer among all, provided free Advent devotion resources, and held a ring-toss game for children with candy prizes for all.

With a new spin on the game, children tossed glow rings to a wreath with candles that were labeled Hope, Love, Joy and Peace in their purple and pink colors.

Volunteers encouraged and cheered the children while sharing their own faith and the love of Christ.

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RALLY

From page 1

“We stand before You as men and women of faith who seek to do Your will by protecting those souls who need our assistance the most,” he prayed.

He called on God to help state lawmakers be “unrelenting warriors for the child in the womb, who silently seeks only one thing: to be born alive.”

“Fortify them, Lord, to be guardians for those who need it the most,” the priest prayed, “that in turn, they and we, Your servants, may be a light of Christ to the world.”

Fr. Viviano stated that rallies and laws are good and necessary, but God’s blessing, relied upon through prayer and sacrifice, is imperative and irreplaceable.

“No matter how the ruling comes down, we must never, EVER relent in our prayer for the unborn,” he said.

“Great cloud of witnesses”

Several speakers drew parallels between the Mississippi law the Supreme Court is considering and HB-126, the Missouri Stands for the Unborn Act, which state lawmak-



Some of the participants in a prayerful rally on Dec. 1 on the steps of the Missouri Supreme Court building in Jefferson City carry signs calling for an end to legalized abortion.
— Photo by Jay Nies

ers passed into law in 2019.

That law’s sponsor, state Rep. Nick Schroer, noted that it includes a “trigger ban” that would make Missouri one of 12 states in which abortion-on-demand would become illegal if the Supreme Court ever overturns *Roe v. Wade*.

“Prayer is what got us HB 126,” Rep. Schroer stated. “Prayer is what got this pro-life generation to fire up other individuals and make sure the U.S. Supreme Court hears this *Dobbs* case.”

He called on everyone to pray for the Supreme Court justices, for the attorneys who argued the case, and for conversion for all people who support access to abortion.

“And mostly, we need to pray for the unborn,” he said, “the millions that have

lost their lives since *Roe* was wrongfully decided, and those that will be impacted by this decision.”



Deacon Samuel Lee, founder and director of Campaign Life Missouri, speaks of God’s command to “rescue those being led away to death” and “hold back those staggering toward slaughter.”

Susan Klein, executive director and chief lobbyist for Missouri Right to Life, pointed out that Missouri has passed over 50 laws pertaining to abortion since 1973.

“Missouri has led the nation in passing pro-life laws,” she stated. “We love the mom and we love the baby, and we believe that unborn children should be protected, and that a woman should be protected from the deceptions of the abortion industry.”

She noted that Missouri’s Heartbeat Law goes farther than the Mississippi law the Supreme Court is considering, by prohibiting most elective abortions when the heartbeat

can be detected, as early as eight weeks into pregnancy.

“It has brought our abortion numbers down from well over 20,000 per year to 123 to date this year,” she said.

Ms. Klein called on everyone to continue praying for the justices as they deliberate the *Dobbs* case, and to remain vigilant, regardless of how the court rules.

“Even if *Roe* is overturned, we’re still going to have to be here fighting,” she stated.

She spoke of the “great cloud of witnesses” in heaven who surround the throngs of believers here on earth (Hebrews 12:1).

“We know that in that cloud of witnesses in heaven, there are over 65 million babies that never saw sunlight on this earth,” she said.

laws are still stuck in 1973, made by inhumane and unjust Supreme Court decisions that made it legal for a woman to have an abortion for any reason, at any time,” she said.

Convinced that *Roe v. Wade* will eventually be overturned, she urged everyone at the rally to “remain steadfast and courageous in this fight for life.”

Justin Smith, Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt’s assistant deputy attorney general for special litigation, said that during the oral arguments, Supreme Court justices sounded open to returning regulation of abortion to the states.

“And we hope and pray that the Supreme Court will grant that request after today’s arguments, and will allow states to protect those unborn children who are ‘fearfully and wonderfully made,’” he said, referring to Psalm 139:14.

State Rep. Cheri Toalson Reich spoke of several of her friends’ experiences of having had an abortion.

“These women grieve, these women are regretful and remorseful for what they did,” she said. “They didn’t know then what we know now. They are sorry and wish they could go back and undo what they did.”

Jennifer Gore, legislative liaison for Concerned Women for America, said an important means of magnifying God’s greatness is to trust in Him.

“That’s what we’re doing here today,” she said. “We’re saying, ‘Lord, we know we cannot right this wrong. We cannot nullify this grievous evil of abortion that has plagued our nation for too long. But You can.’”

“So let us lift our voices to heaven,” she said, “trusting in His goodness and faithfulness to provide guidance in the battle.”

Everyone has a role


Lucy Gonzalez, Missouri and Arkansas regional coordinator for Students for Life of America, spoke of the more than half of her millennial generation who believe abor-

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NCYC

From page 1

junior, and his brother Andrew, a freshman at MHS, traveled to Indianapolis with their parish youth group.

"We need to refuel ourselves with God and a passion for Him," said Thomas. "With the spark from NCYC, we'll be able to spread the flame throughout our society and world."

Andrew talked about the impressive array of break-out sessions that took place Saturday afternoon throughout the convention center.

"And there's an indoor village with a bunch of different booths staffed by Catholic colleges and different Catholic organizations," he said.

NCYC included concerts, keynote speakers, workshops, interactive exhibits, and opportunities to adore Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

"Closer to God"

About 300 people from the Jefferson City diocese traveled to Indianapolis in six buses from points throughout the Jefferson City diocese and stayed in the same hotel.

Several students from Sacred Heart High School in Sedalia made the journey to Indianapolis.

Junior Eli Smeltzer found the music, the emcees and the entire experience appealing.

"Lucas Oil Stadium was ablaze with 11,000 teen-agers singing and participating like at a regular concert," he said.

This was senior Claire Smeltzer's second NCYC. She said the best parts were the closing Mass on Saturday night, with more than 10,000 teens worshipping and praising God together.

"A football stadium meant for football games and rowdy fans housed over 140 priests, deacons, bishops and archbishops," she marveled.

Sophomore Miariah Van-Leer went looking for "a huge sign" from the Holy Spirit but received something more subtle. While searching one of the tables for a keychain containing a specific saint's image to give to someone she's sponsoring for Confirmation, she



Groups of high school teens and their chaperones from Sacred Heart School in Sedalia (left) and Queen of Peace Parish in Ewing (right) stop for a photo during their trip to Indianapolis to attend the National Catholic Youth Conference.



quietly and half-jokingly asked Jesus to help her find it.

"I looked up, and there it was!" she said.

She said NCYC has helped her appreciate her faith more deeply, grow in it and realize that she still has a long way to go.

"However, it was also very comforting to know that as youth, we aren't expected to have everything figured out. We just have to wholeheartedly trust in the Lord," she said.

Sophomore Megan Aonzo, a first-time NCYC participant, enjoyed the smaller break-out sessions the most.

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

"They were more intimate and seemed more spiritual in a smaller session," she said.

Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the stadium was sophomore Luke Jenkins's most memorable experience there.

"I was overwhelmed by a sense of silence and peace," he said. "It also showed me that the Holy Spirit is always ablaze in my heart if I'm just willing to listen!"

Sophomore Jackson Manning benefitted from the candid testimonies given by fellow Catholic teens during the general sessions — especially those who had experienced questions and doubts about their faith.

"I hope God will call on me and help me grow in my faith and allow me to have a better understanding and a relationship with Him," he said.

Sophomore Tommy Mertens loved the mixture of fun and faith. He said the speakers answered questions about faith and the Church's teachings that had been puzzling him for years.

"I have never felt closer to God and to my faith," he said. "I am proud to be Catholic and am excited to go to NCYC in 2023."

"Here for a reason"

Marley Corpe and Mackenzie Collins both go to School of the Osage and are members of Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Lake Ozark.

They had never met each other before NCYC.

"Now we're becoming really good friends through our relationship with God," said Marley.

She hopes parishes throughout the diocese will help young people stay connected by incorporating some of the kind of upbeat music they heard at NCYC into Mass and other times for prayer and worship.

"I lot of us do relate better to that kind of music," she said.

She asked for prayers for her and the rest of the teens to grow into having as strong and passionate a relationship with God every day as they experienced at their most thrilling moments at NCYC.

"It can be easy to lose sight of what's important when you have so much else going on," she said. "We need to remem-

ber that we're here for one reason, and that's God's purpose."

Trey Struempf, a member of St. Lawrence Parish in St. Elizabeth said the best thing about NCYC was knowing that everyone there felt welcome and accepted.

"Some might think a simple social event doesn't have the ability to help those who are suffering physically or mentally," he said. "But they would be wrong."

He's convinced that events such as NCYC have the power to lift people up and heal their wounds, especially if they're struggling with depression.

"NCYC may be the beginning of their road to maintaining a positive mental attitude," he said.

"Wonderful work of God"

A week after he returned home, messages from NCYC are still turning over in Brody Spriggs's mind.

"During one of the sessions, they said it's easy to veer off the right path, and it's not as easy to get back onto it," Brody, a member of Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Lake Ozark, recalled.

See YOUTH, page 17



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By Father Don Antweiler

ACROSS

1. "T'was the Night Before Christmas" was the popular poem that established our iconic image of St. Nick (only later called Santa Claus). Its original title was "A ____ from St. Nicholas."
6. 19th book of the Bible; one of the heroines of the Old Testament.
11. "I've lost ____ in going somewhere to look at new things. I want to see ordinary things I'm passing in a new way," —*Motorcycle Days, The making of a Twobit Mystic* by Robert Antweiler.
13. A unit of energy in an air

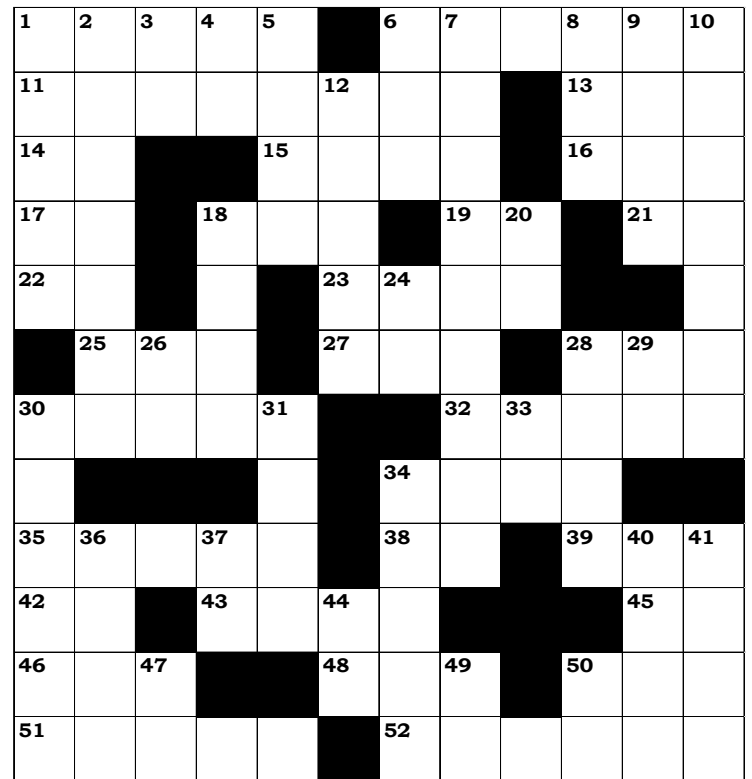
- conditioner.
14. Xenon gas on the periodic table; only present in trace amounts; colorless, tasteless, odorless and not volatile; 4.5 times heavier than air; used as light in high-speed photography (abbr.).
 15. The real St. Nicholas was a bishop in what is today Turkey around 280 A.D. His legendary generosity with children gradually morphed ____ today's Santa Claus.
 16. "We have always found the Irish a bit _____. They refuse to be English," — Winston Churchill.
 17. What's the answer? Well, I, _____, uh, don't know.
 18. Your criticism of her sounds like the ____ calling the kettle black.
 19. 101 in ancient Rome.
 21. "Among the harmless snakes the ____-called black snakes are the largest and most numerous. On average they are four to six feet long but sometimes attain a length often feet and over," —*A German*

22. The part of the Bible that contains the books Timothy and Titus (abbr.).
23. Mild shrieks.
25. From the beginning the plan seemed ____ conceived.
27. Baseball stat.
28. Minor devil.
30. In 1812, instead of a sleigh with flying reindeer, St. Nick's vehicle was described as a self-driving _____.
32. They finally got the come-from-behind winning run in the ____ inning!
34. Four letters often heard on Friday.
35. Since 1914, letters written to Santa Claus end up, not at the ____ pole, but in the small post office in Santa Claus, Indiana.
38. Q-T
39. Reproductive eggs.
42. Relative of Ln. or Ave.
43. For the Puritans in 1659 in Massachusetts, the celebration of Christmas was illegal and would draw a _____, or worse. They saw it as a pagan custom that Catholics took over with no biblical basis for it.
45. Method to bring fluids and medicine directly to your body's bloodstream.
46. "..._____ the land of the free and the home of the brave," —Star Spangled Banner.
48. Last word in a book, perhaps.
50. "T'was the Night Before Christmas" was written by a biblical professor, Clement Clark Moore, in 1822, which he originally read to his children on Christmas _____.

51. Santa Claus gets Christmas letters from all over the _____, with the most coming from France (1.7 million), then Canada (at 1.35 million), and then from the U.S. (1 million).
52. The name of one of Santa's reindeer.

DOWN

1. The name of one of Santa's reindeer.
2. The state or tendency to stay at rest.
3. Abbr. found before the names of the canonized.
4. Abbr. meaning, in other words.



5. E.g., the Magi.
6. East, in France.
7. We celebrate the feast of St. Nicholas on Dec. 6th, traditionally the date to hang ____ on the fireplace mantle.
8. One of the first movie cable channels.
9. "The perp is leaving on one of these flights" cried the detective. "Check all their estimated time of departures (____)!"
10. ____ with his red nose was added to the reindeer list in 1939 when a Montgomery Ward dept. store ad-man wrote the story for the store's own children's book. Singing cowboy Gene Autry popularized it in 1949 with a #1 hit song.
12. "Whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not ____ it," (Mark 10:15).
18. Called the sport of kings, or croquet on horses, or hockey on horseback, this sport originated as cavalry training in Mongolia and Iran, then spread to India and Arabia. It is now played in over 100 countries worldwide. The St. Louis Club, established in 1883, is the 2nd oldest existing club in the U.S.
20. "What child ____ this?" —Christmas carol.
24. Letters for Epstein Barr, a herpes virus, one of the most common viruses in humans.
26. T-shirt size.
28. It's easy to register in the

- parish. Just enter your ____ online.
29. Abbr. for one of the two Gospels with the familiar Christmas stories (infancy narratives).
30. Santa early on was pictured as slipping through a ____ to deliver his toys. In 1812, Washington Irving instead pictured him as going down a chimney. The image stuck.
31. A brand of soda, introduced in 1924.
33. Pope St. John Paul _____.
34. Most hoped the fashionista's latest outfit would not be a ____-setter.
36. Delicious sandwich cookie.
37. Short for Transformers, living, human-like robot toys with the unique ability to turn into vehicles or beasts. The franchise has spawned six movies.
40. ____ la France!" English equivalent: Long live France!" The phrase often concludes French political speeches.
41. Assert.
44. One of the 4 States, the capital of which is named for a U.S. President (abbr.).
47. B&O or Reading on a Monopoly board.
49. Short for District Attorney, chief prosecutor for the government (the people).
50. "____, what's up, Doc?" said Bugs to Elmer.

ANSWERS on page 19

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Young people and chaperones from the Jefferson City diocese gather for a photo after Mass in the ballroom of the hotel during the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis.

YOUTH

From page 15

He related to one of the presenters' image of being part of something like a stained-glass window — with seemingly broken pieces being fitted together by a master artisan according to a great plan to create something beautiful.

"We're all different, but we're all a wonderful work of God," he said.

He believes his outlook, and by extension his entire life, has changed because of NCYC.

"I'm feeling more connected with God," he said.

He believes parishes can help keep the momentum going by creating youth groups and providing young people opportunities to get together and talk about God, and not just at Mass.

"Actually being able to interact with people and talk about God helps a lot," he said.

He asks for prayers for him and his fellow teens to stay close to God — "not just knowing that He's there but talking to Him and having Him involved in my life every day."

His mother, Paulette Spriggs, was excited to go with him and the rest of the group from Our Lady of the Lake.

"As a parent, watching your own child and the other young people grow closer to God is really neat," she said.

She enjoyed hearing Brody talk about the break-out sessions and what he took away from each of them.

She found the closing Mass to be breathtaking.

She also enjoyed growing in friendship with fellow parents in her parish. She believes it's important for adults to set

a good example of practicing their faith joyfully throughout the week.

"Our faith brought us together," she said. "And having people I know I can talk to if I have questions is really great."

"Hope for the future"

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight, who traveled to Indianapolis to spend time with the young people, found it enjoyable but somewhat exhausting.

"The energy and enthusiasm our youth have is inspired and gives me much hope for the future of the Church," he said.

"My hope is that when the youth return to the diocese, they may find welcoming parish communities that are open to their new ideas for evangelizing others, especially the young," he said.

"And I hope our youth never forget their dignity as sons and daughters of the Church," he added.

Randy Holtmeyer, an adult chaperone from St. Anthony of Padua Parish in St. Anthony, said chasing a bunch of high schoolers around downtown Indianapolis so they can grow in their faith is hard.

"Watching them grow up in an ever-growing faithless world is also hard," he stated.

He came away from NCYC with a better understanding that all people, young and old alike, are called by the Holy Spirit, just like the Apostles who were gathered in the Upper Room on Pentecost Sunday.

"We're all called to spread

the message of Jesus, to spread His love, His mercy, His grace, His forgiveness, His compassion, His kindness," he said. "And it starts today! It starts with you and me! It starts within our homes, our churches, our schools."

Mr. Holterman is convinced that some of the people he met will still be in contact years from now. Others will never see each other again in this life.

"I'll pray that each of you

dous energy and joy.

She said she was amazed not only with the fervor of the closing Mass but with the small-group interaction she witnessed back at the hotel afterward.

"The intentional faith sharing was inspirational," she said. "Sometimes we underestimate the power of the parish community, just like we sometimes forget the power of the domestic church at home."



A group of teens from the Jefferson City diocese meets for faith sharing in the hotel after the closing Mass at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis.

— Photo by Maureen Quinn

have the courage to continue to grow in your faith while spreading the message you received this weekend," he told his young followers on social media.

What's next?

Maureen Quinn, diocesan director of youth ministry and religious education, and Father Paul Clark, diocesan vocation director, also attended NCYC.

Mrs. Quinn said gathering as people of faith from one diocese after the past year-and-a-half of pandemic isolation felt like a gift that brought tremen-

detect," said Fr. Clark. "It's moments like these that provide an opportunity to remember when God revealed Himself to you, and now you get to build your life on this moment."

Mrs. Quinn urged the young people to attend Mass regularly, read the Bible and pray daily, get involved in a Catholic youth group, volunteer in their communities and surround themselves with other people who are striving for virtue.

"We are not consumers of faith, expecting only to receive something," Fr. Clark insisted. "We are to be transformed by our faith!"

Fr. Clark and Mrs. Quinn encouraged the adults on the trip to work with their parishes to make them more welcoming to young people, and to accept help from the diocese for doing so and make the most of the available resources.

"More God"

Thomas Peuster from Mexico requested prayers for all of the young people to have a religious transformation and a moment where they can commit to making God the focus of their lives.

"Maybe a lot of young people are questioning their beliefs," he stated. "Pray for us so that we may accept Him and accept everything that we need to believe as Catholics."

"More Jesus, that's what we need," said his brother, Andrew. "More God in our lives. That's what we really need. Keep it simple and stay focused on that."

Need more info about an event or want to see more events?
Visit the diocesan EVENT CALENDAR at diojeffcity.org/events.
Want your event listed?
Fill out the ONLINE FORM at diojeffcity.org/event-listing.

Fundraisers & Social Events

- Dec. 10
Mexico, K of C fish fry, 4-7 pm
- Dec. 10-Jan. 9
Laurie, Festival of Lights, 5-10 pm, National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church
- Dec. 10 & 11
Starkenburg, The Spirit of CHRISTmas concerts, 2:30 pm, St. Martin's Church Museum
- Dec. 11
Russellville, St. Michael Parish Christmas Bazaar & luncheon, 10 am-1 pm
- Dec. 12
Belle, St. Alexander Parish breakfast, 7-11 am
- Dec. 17
Jefferson City, Fr. Helias K of C #1054 Christmas chili supper, 4-7 pm, K of C Hall, Tanner Bridge Rd.; Laurie, Festival of Lights celebration, with caroling & music, hot chocolate & s'mores, campfire and gift shop, 5:30-8 pm, National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church

SILECCHIA

From page 9

ever they have seen has made it far too difficult to hope or rejoice. Others have no time or energy to celebrate because they silently work multiple jobs or scramble to care for those unable to care for themselves. Still others know they will not celebrate Christmas in their own homes because they will be keeping vigil with loved ones in hospitals, hospices, and nursing homes.

Some parents will face a pang of loss this season if their children announce they have grown skeptical of Santa. Other parents will face a far greater, more poignant pain if their children confide they have grown skeptical of God.

For some, the cares of life may have robbed them of a bit of their own faith in a season when it is yearned for the most.

As we leave ordinary time for a spell and begin Advent, we enter the season that seems particularly meant for those who carry great burdens. All appearances to the contrary, Advent is not the season of the jolly songs and frantic festivities of Christmas. It comes in the darkest days of the year when the nights are the longest and light most scarce. It is a season that recalls the ancient world's aching wait for Christ, yearning for the tidings of great joy that had not yet come. It is not a season of red and green and gold and silver, but of purple — because the joy promised is hoped for, but not yet here.

Dec. 19
Linn, K of C breakfast, 7-11 am

Jan. 2
Vienna, K of C breakfast, 7:30-11 am

Jan. 8
Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Contemporary Group "Farewell to Christmas" Epiphany concert, 7-8:30 pm

Meetings & Conferences

Dec. 18
VIRTUAL, Couple to Couple League natural family planning introductory session, 8-9 am, to RSVP email MidMoNFP@gmail.com

Jan. 3
VIRTUAL, Couple to Couple League natural family planning introductory session, 8-9 pm, to RSVP email MidMoNFP@gmail.com

Jan. 15
VIRTUAL, Couple to Couple League natural family plan-

ning introductory session, 8-9 am, to RSVP email MidMoNFP@gmail.com

Liturgical

Dec. 12
Sedalia, St. Vincent de Paul Parish Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, 11 am Mañanitas, 11:45 am Mass, St. Juan Diego play, lunch and traditional dancing, St. Patrick Chapel

Retreats & Spiritual Renewal

Jan. 7-9
Moberly, Engaged Encounter weekend, St. Pius X Parish, for info or to register visit diojeffcity.org/marriage-preparation/engaged-encounter

Health & Wellness

Jan. 3
Rich Fountain, Blood drive, 2-6 pm, Sacred Heart School cafeteria

CSA

From page 3

"We are 'the diocese'"

Father Joseph Corel, one of the pastors *in solidum* of St. Vincent de Paul Parish of Pettis County, recently wrote to parishioners about how helping the CSA helps local parishes.

"As you are probably aware, when the Roman Catholic Church writes documents and refers to the local Church, it is referring to the local diocese," Fr. Corel wrote. "All parishes belong to the local Church, the diocese. The diocese refers to everyone who lives within a particular region as designated by the Pope. So, you and I are 'the diocese.'"

Here are a few of the examples he gave of how the CSA benefits parishes:

- "The Communications Department assists us with *The Catholic Missourian* subscriptions, website updates, writing stories for *The Catholic Missourian* and diocesan website, branding and logos for the parish; creates the Monday Memo which anyone can receive to stay informed on news across the diocese.

- "The Religious Education, Young Adult and Youth Ministry department assists us with the Rite of Christian

Initiation of Adults, PSR, Youth Ministry Core Teams, offers diocesan events such as the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC), Teens Encounter Christ (TEC), NET Teams, "Totus Tuus," and more.

- "The Hispanic Ministry Coordinator assists in several ways across all ministries within the diocese: Spanish-language Cursillo support; Charismatica support; Quinceñaras, sacramental preparation, retreats, days of reflection and translations.

- "The Marriage tribunal assists with most of our weddings and all annulment cases.

- "The School Office works with us on all facets of the school. It is rare when a week goes by where someone in the parish or school administration is not contacting the school office."

Strength in unity

Mrs. Quinn pointed out that CSA-funded ministries can never replace the work of the parishes but only support them and help them become stronger.

"We're a part of the picture," she stated. "The parishes and domestic Church are a constant presence. We're there to give them support."

POPE

From page 11

Intelligent, European-wide policies for welcoming newcomers, he said, will guarantee "a future marked by peaceful coexistence with all those who increasingly are forced to flee in search of a new home and new hope. They are the protagonists of a horrendous modern Odyssey," he added, referring to Homer's epic poem.

Pope Francis ended his speech expressing the hope that "from this city, from this cradle of civilization, may there ever continue to resound a message that lifts our gaze both on high and toward others; that democracy may be the response to the siren songs of authoritarianism; and that individualism and indifference may be overcome by concern for others, for the poor and for creation."

"These," he said, "are essential foundations for the renewed humanity which our time, and our Europe, need."

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Diocese of Jefferson City

If you are facing Christmas this year with sorrow in your heart, I hope that you will find comfort in believing that, truly, Advent is the season for you. It is the season for all those who hope for what they do not have, and who yearn to see light after a season of darkness.

If you are seeking a new tradition this year, particularly if this year has treated you well, I have a gentle suggestion. On the first Sunday of Advent, remember all those you know whose hearts might be aching a bit. Devote some time to them that day as we enter this season of yearning, waiting, and hoping in the darkness. A visit, an email, a text, a letter, a phone call or the promise of prayer might be exactly what they need to know that they do not wait alone for the light to dawn.

The first Sunday of Advent seems the perfect time to assure those who suffer that Advent is, in the words of ancient carols, a time to "rest beside the weary road" until, once again, "a weary world rejoices." It is a season to help each other move toward Christmas peace by sharing the burdens of ordinary times.

Lucia A. Silecchia is a Professor of Law at the Catholic University of America. "On Ordinary Times" is a biweekly column reflecting on the ways to find the sacred in the simple. Email her at silecchia@cua.edu.

Anniversaries

Argyle, St. Aloysius
Mark & Melissa Becker, 29 years

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul
Kenny & Doris Kempf, 68 years
Jerry & Loretta Quinlan, 68 years
John & Ruth Hoff, 63 years
JD & Gretchen Twenter, 53 years
James & Theresa Innes, 45 years
Steve & Jane Brengarth, 43 years
Scott & Peggy Fenical, 43 years
Kenny & Terri Nordmeyer, 43 years
Tom & Juanita White, 43 years
Chris & Beth Vonderahe, 36 years
Joe & Elaine Green, 34 years
Joe & Gigi McAreavy, 30 years
Matt & Stephanie Adams, 29 years
Greg & Lana Kempf, 28 years

Centralia, Holy Spirit
Wayne & Linda Benoit, 60 years

Cuba, Holy Cross
Paul & Patricia Maerli, 60 years

Edina, St. Joseph
Larry & Cleva Clark, 50 years

Fayette, St. Joseph
Bill & Mardell Wies, 45 years

Folk, St. Anthony of Padua
Sam & Linda Vollmert, 41 Years
Joe & Henrietta Woehr, 20 Years

Jefferson City, Cathedral of St. Joseph
Harry & Pat Wilding, 62 years

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception
Eddie & Ann Mulholland, 40 years

Kahoka, St. Michael
Dale & Dixie Small, 32 years

Kirksville, Mary Immaculate
George & Diane Schulte, 50 years
Glenn & Vicky Wehner, 44 years
Steve & Kit Hadwiger, 36 years
Charlie & Tina Zeman, 35 years
Jay & Vicki Benson, 28 years
Todd & Kristina Palumbo, 28 years
Brent & Susan Speak, 22 years

Koeltztown, St. Boniface
Bill & Judy Heckman, 57 years
James & Bruna Ortals, 51 years
Kenny & Janet Kliethermes, 43 years
Michael & Patti Wansing, 32 years

Lake Ozark, Our Lady of the Lake
Bob & Kathy Cotter, 54 years

Names for the People Page

Information for the People Page comes from parish correspondents and individual parishioners, as well as bulletins and newspapers. Submissions for anniversaries (10 years or more), birthdays (90 years or more), and baptisms, deaths, marriages and initiations of local parishioners may be e-mailed to editor@di-ojeffcity.org or mailed to *The Catholic Missourian*, 2207 West Main Street, Jefferson City, MO 65109-0914.

Martinsburg, St. Joseph
Mark & Linda Fennwald, 42 years
Henry & Kathleen Borgmeyer, 25 years

Milan, St. Mary
Felipe & Consuelo Bahena, 30 years
Efren Lopez & Teresa Carrillo, 29 years

Mokane, St. Jude Thaddeus
Larry & Carol Bax, 40 years

Palmyra, St. Joseph
John & Carol Weilandich, 54 years
Doug & Marie Baker, 42 years
Ed & Pam Hess, 40 years
Randy & Denise Dodd, 27 years

Sedalia, St. Vincent de Paul
Mike & Debbie Bolin, 40 years

Tipton, St. Andrew
Randy & Kay Clifford, 45 years

Vienna, Visitation
Adam & Kay Wieberg, 59 years
Greg & Laura Stratman, 42 years
Joe & Brenda Weidinger, 41 years

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels
Kenny & Nina Huber, 49 years
Lloyd & Jeannie Burk, 48 years
Mike & Kyra Brehm, 33 years

Marriages

Mary's Home, Our Lady of Snows — **Morgan Stieferman & Koby Limbachwera**

Sacraments of Initiation

Moberly — **Nealie Bear, Royce Black, Michael Carter, William Dorlac, Ryan Ewbank, Whitney Fenton, Jake Gastler, Norah Harvey, Clairann Lingo, Kyran Lingo, Melyssa Neuner, Jack Prewitt, James Saltkill, Daniel Schneider, Olyvia Schultz, Addyson Schultz, Colton Schultz, Christopher Welch**, who received Sacraments of Initiation at St. Pius X Parish this year

Elections

Ewing, Queen of Peace — **Jeff Henderson, Judy Klocke, Rachel McKenzie, Tina Neisen, Christel Roberts, Carrie Raleigh, Victor Raleigh, Aaron Schmitz**, to the Parish Pastoral Council

Marshall, St. Peter — **Leo Grothaus, Cynthia Henke, Ann Orear, Al Terhung, Larry Widel**, to the Parish Pastoral Council

Baptisms

Brookfield, Immaculate Conception — **Benjamin Patrick O'Kane**, son of Bryant & Kaci O'Kane

Centralia, Holy Spirit — **George Joseph Rush Auck**, son of Sayre & Justina Auck; **Marley Laraine Henke**, daughter of Lance & Lindy Henke; **Livie Pepper Hutinger**, daughter of Troy & Kristen Hutinger

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — **Raylena Berry**

Jefferson City, St. Peter — **Alexa Maria Dianne Bowers, Jacob Israel Bowers, Francis Burnham Vanderfelt**

Kahoka, St. Michael — **Blake Michael Gray**

Martinsburg, St. Joseph — **Glen Alvin IV and Walker Joseph Jensen**, sons of Glenn & Samantha Jensen

Mary's Home, Our Lady of Snows — **Haven Marie Connell**, daughter of Gregory & Kaitlyn Connell

Moberly, St. Pius X — **Samuel and Maisy Dalbey**, children of Mark & Katie Dalbey

Palmyra, St. Joseph — **Charles Bruce Sherman**, son of Austin & Marylyn Sherman

Taos, St. Francis Xavier — **Hudson James Kresl**

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels — **Jocelynn Maxine Quinn and Anna Rose Marie Bennett**, children of Teresa Leads

FR. DOYLE

From page 8

But be careful not to force it. To strong-arm your son about his religious responsibility could have a negative effect, including jeopardizing your relationship with him for a long time.

Do you think it might be better for now simply to pray for them, that they will reach the choice of baptism on their own? And remember that God cares about the baby's salvation even more than you do.

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

Deaths

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul — **Clare Trelc-Lang, Joseph Koller, Raymond L. Twenter**

Brunswick, St. Boniface — **Ricky Young**

Canton, St. Joseph — **Buddy Jones**

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — **Jennifer Haight**

Fulton, St. Peter — **William Tougaw**

Kahoka, St. Michael — **Delores Tramel**

Koeltztown, St. Boniface — **Margaret Sankey**

Lake Ozark, Our Lady of the Lake — **Frank Medved**

Linn, St. George — **Hugo Brandt, Judy Rustemeyer**

Mokane, St. Jude Thaddeus — **Frank Timmermeier**

Palmyra, St. Joseph — **Florence H. Fohey**

Salisbury, St. Joseph — **Ruth Huss**

Sedalia, St. Vincent de Paul — **Betty Friedebach, Trudy Karrigan-Knight**

Taos, St. Francis Xavier — **William Thessen**

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels — **Dorothy Weimer**


Birthdays

St. James, Immaculate Conception — **Josephine Marcus**, her 98th on Nov. 15

Crossword puzzle answers

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

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Rob Fatherly Memorial



The eighth-grade volleyball team at Our Lady of Lourdes Interparish School in Columbia held a charity event to support Rainbow House Children's Emergency Shelter in Columbia, in memory of their former teacher, Rob Fatherley, who died this past summer. Rainbow House temporarily houses children who are in foster care or homeless, and assists parents who request placement for their children during a family crisis. The Rob Fatherley Memorial Charity Event consisted of a volleyball game, followed up with a powder-puff football game. The 8th grade volleyball team wore pink socks, hair and "eye black" under their eyes, and even designed their own jerseys for the special occasion. Their right shoulder displayed the initials, RF, within a cross with angel wings on each side. The 8th-grade football players wore their school jerseys with pride. Over 150 people — classmates and families in the community — came out to show their support for the athletes and Rainbow House. The event raised \$1,578, and Robinson + Ries Orthodontics, a local business and parishioner of Our Lady of Lourdes, matched the amount, bringing the total to \$3,156.

— Photo by Cari Hall

Soccer Challenge

Alden Bonnot takes his shoot-out during Knights of Columbus Missouri State Council's District Soccer Challenge for boys and girls ages 9 through 14, hosted Oct. 14 by Knights of Columbus Bishop McAuliffe Council 12992 in Jefferson City. Sixty-three boys and girls participated. Committee chairman Tom Verry and nine other Knights and family members facilitated the event.

— Photo by Christopher Pierce, grand knight, Council 12992



Celebrating grandparents

Students of Immaculate Conception School in Montgomery City and their grandparents enjoy fellowship and beautiful weather during their Grandparents Day celebration Sept. 23. The day included a prayer service in church, delicious food, and games and crafts in the classrooms.

— Photo from the Immaculate Conception School-Montgomery City Facebook page



Thanking veterans for their service



Eighth-graders at St. Brendan School in Mexico display the cards they created to send to military veterans in recognition of their service to this country.

— Photo from the Saint Brendan Catholic School of Mexico, MO Facebook page



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John baptizes the people and Jesus

By Jennifer Ficaglia
Catholic News Service

In the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, the word of God came to Zechariah's son, John, in the desert.

John traveled throughout Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

This fulfilled a prophecy found in the Book of Isaiah:

"A voice of one crying out in the desert: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

Crowds of people came to



John to be baptized.

"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" he asked.

He told the people he was baptizing that they needed to

produce good fruits as a sign of their repentance.

"Every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire," he warned.

Bible Accent

When we hear the name Gabriel, we recall how this messenger angel visited Mary to announce that she would become the mother of Jesus.

But before he visited Mary, Gabriel delivered a special message about another baby who was to be born.

In Luke 1:5-25, we read that Zechariah the priest had entered the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense when Gabriel appeared to him.

"Your prayer has been heard," Gabriel told Zechariah. "Your wife Elizabeth will bear

you a son, and you shall name him John."

Zechariah did not believe what he had heard. He and his wife were very old, and Elizabeth couldn't have children.

Gabriel did not appreciate Zechariah's doubt, so he made it so Zechariah couldn't talk until after the baby was born.

Zechariah fulfilled his priestly duties and then returned home. Not long after, Elizabeth became pregnant, just as Gabriel had said.

The time finally came for Elizabeth to have her baby. She

gave birth to a boy whom she and Zechariah named John.

We know him by the name John the Baptist.

Essay

Describe a time when you were asked to give an important message to someone.

Saint Spotlight



St. Melania was born into a wealthy Roman family in the fourth century and was married to a relative against her will. She eventually won over her husband to her lifestyle of religious devotion and austerity. They sold property to help the poor and the Church, and they also freed thousands of slaves. When the Visigoths invaded, they went to North Africa, where she endowed two religious houses. They went to Jerusalem in 417. After her husband died, Melania founded a women's community on the Mount of Olives and shared their life of prayer and good works. Melania died in 439, and we remember her Dec. 31.

Puzzle

Using the hints provided, put a T next to the sentences about John the Baptist that are true and an F next to the ones that are false.

- ___ John wore clothing made of camel's hair. (Matthew 3:4)
- ___ John baptized people in the Red Sea. (Matthew 3:6)
- ___ John said God could raise up children to Abraham from stones. (Luke 3:8)
- ___ John called Jesus the Lamb of God. (John 1:36)



Answers: 1. T, 2. F, 3. T, 4. T.

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Children's books focus on charity, joy of Christmas season

By Regina Lordan
Catholic News Service

The following books are suitable for Christmas giving:

•*The Night the Saints Saved Christmas*, by Gracie Jagla, illustrated by Michael Corsini. Our Sunday Visitor (Huntington, Indiana, 2021). 28 pp., \$16.95.

Whimsical, clever and silly, *The Night the Saints Saved Christmas* will leave readers rooting for a heroic community of saints who all pitch in to help out a bedridden St. Nicholas.

Using their particular strengths and regional knowledge, recognizable saints tackle the enormous task now in potential peril of delivering gifts to children around the world. St. Joan of Arc carries her load on horseback while St. John Paul II balances his bundle on skis to save the day.

Each saint's selfless and joyful contribution to save Christmas importantly reminds readers that a Christmas gift is a symbol of God's grace. A great

story with a sweet message for Catholic children, this rhyming book will be enjoyed year after year. Ages 5 and up.

•*Ephraim's Gladness*, by Madeleine Carroll, illustrated by Randy Friemel. Isaiah Books (Little Bookham, United Kingdom, 2021). 28 pp., \$16.05.

Catholic children's book author Madeleine Carroll once again has written a book with prose so gentle and calming that it reads almost like a lullaby. Illustrated with beautiful original oil scenes, *Ephraim's Gladness* combines the parable of the lost sheep with the Nativity story.

Enjoyable for adults and children alike, this book naturally lends itself to a reading and discussion of the Gospel of Luke. The two biblical stories inspiring the story are included to help facilitate reflection. Ages 4-8.

•*The Beggar and the Bluebird*, by Anthony DeStefano, illustrated by Richard Cowdrey. Sophia Institute Press

(Manchester, New Hampshire, 2021). 32 pp., \$16.95.

Those who appreciate Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince* will find in *The Beggar and the Bluebird* a charming picture book that is memorable if not a little predictable. Laden with themes highlighting selflessness and charity, this book will leave readers feeling a little sad but full of hope.

Set within a snowy urban Christmas season, the book is a fitting addition to author Anthony DeStefano's lengthy list of poignant children's books. Ages 5-10.

•*Joseph's Donkey*, by Anthony DeStefano, illustrated by Juliana Kolesova. Sophia Institute Press (Manchester, New Hampshire, 2021). 40 pp., \$16.95.

Even the most stoic reader can't not weep just a little after reading *Joseph's Donkey*, another perfectly saccharine children's book by Anthony DeStefano. This is the story of a humble donkey's lifetime of work for and devotion to the Holy Family.

Told in simple rhyme, the book is beautifully illustrated with soft, lifelike images. Adults and children will fall in love with this gentle beast of burden and the family it serves. Ages 5 and up.

•*The Treasure With a Face*, by Janeen Zaio. Perpetual Light Publishing (Columbus, Ohio 2021). 269 pp., \$12.69.

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Sundays, 8 am, KRLL-AM 1420, California

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Movie Ratings



Adults and Adolescents

Clifford the Big Red Dog (PG)
Encanto (PG)



Adults

Belfast (PG-13)
Eternals (PG-13)
Ghostbusters: Afterlife (PG-13)
King Richard (PG-13)
West Side Story (PG-13)



Limited Adult Audience

Antlers (R)
House of Gucci (R)
Last Night in Soho (R)



Morally Offensive

Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City (R)

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

The Treasure With a Face is a rare find. Exciting adventures, humorous dialogue and relatable characters help make this chapter book engaging and informative for upper elementary and younger middle school readers.

This is the story of a precocious but clumsy 12-year-old apprentice tasked by his demanding uncle to trek more than 100 miles to deliver a precious package.

Although determined to accomplish this mission, the preteen is also eager to simultaneously pursue his passion: treasure hunting. The journey along the way is dangerous and exciting, but ultimately leads to what he was meant to find: the true treasure of the Catholic faith. Ages 9-12.

•*The Wordless Weaver*, by Claudia Cangilla McAdam, illustrated by Caroline Baker Mazure. Our Sunday Visitor (Huntington, Indiana, 2021). 36 pp., \$16.95.

Set during the season of Lent, *The Wordless Weaver* deserves to be included as suitable for Christmas giving and as meaningful all year round. This is the story of young Shira, a talented weaver who was born mute.

Unable to welcome Jesus on

Palm Sunday with the same verbal greetings as her fellow Jerusalemmites, Shira decided to give praise by offering him what she could — her hand-made shroud.

This imaginative fictional tale retells the origin of the Shroud of Turin that will leave readers feeling hopeful, joyful and grateful for God-given talents. Ages 6-10.

•*Saint Joseph: Watch Over My Family*, by Sabine du Mesnil, illustrated by Henjing Zang. Magnificat (New York, 2021). 56 pp., \$13.99.

This lovely children's book will help readers understand St. Joseph on a new and deeper level. The life of this man of few words is explored with passages from the Bible, stories and prayers.

Saint Joseph highlights the inspirational characteristics of this faithful, devoted husband and father, and even includes a few modern-day miraculous stories that give insight into his good-humored nature. Ages 7-10.

•*Sacred Scripture*, by Michael R. Heinlein, illustrated by Frank Fraser. Our Sunday Visitor (Huntington, Indiana, 2021). 24 pp., \$12.95.

See CHILDREN'S BOOKS, page 23

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DECISION

From page 14

tion should be illegal in all or most cases.

"We are the first generation with a pro-life majority since *Roe v. Wade* first began tearing through this country in 1973," she said.

She chided judges and Supreme Court justices who "have pretended that abortion is written in invisible ink in the Constitution in ways that only they can see."

She called on each individual to contribute in his or her own unique way to advancing the pro-life cause.

"Please keep using your gifts, please keep using your God-given talents," she stated, "and together, we WILL make abortion unthinkable."

Kristi Hofferber, director of community engagement for Coalition Life St. Louis, spoke of that organization's 10 years of success in counseling women from the sidewalk outside abortion clinics.

"Giving women lifesaving options is the answer," she said.

Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft said the Supreme Court can declare what is constitutional or unconstitutional, "but they do not decide what is moral and what is right and what is just."

"This is a day for victory!" he stated. "And this is a day to celebrate every one of you fighting for every individual to have life and to have life abundantly that was given to them by God."

Rescue those in danger

Deacon Samuel Lee, founder and director of Campaign Life Missouri, noted that when the U.S. Supreme Court declared a constitutional right to abortion, "it did more than just sentence to death millions of unborn babies."

"The court also bulldozed the right of Missouri's pro-life lawmakers and citizens as well as those of other states to provide effective and comprehensive protection to innocent preborn children," said Deacon Lee, who assists the pastor of All Saints Parish

in Overland, in the St. Louis archdiocese.

He asserted that the Supreme Court can undo that error by returning regulation of abortion to the states and the people.

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

"And not just the right, the obligation, as it says in Proverbs 24:11, to 'rescue those being led away to death' and 'hold back those staggering toward slaughter,'" he said.

"That isn't just a suggestion from God," he stated. "It is a command from Sacred Scripture."

He pointed out that Missouri has a long and distinguished history of defending unborn human life, summarized in Chapter 188.026 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri.

Missouri's first laws regarding abortion were enacted in 1825 and were revised and reenacted several times since then.

The Missouri Supreme Court ruled in 1885 that "the child is, in truth, alive from the moment of conception."

Deacon Lee pointed to a unique statement of principle in the Missouri Stands for the Unborn Act: "to defend the right to life of all humans, born and unborn, and to declare that this state of Missouri, and all of its political subdivisions, are a sanctuary of life that protects women and their unborn children."

In prayer, he called upon God to guide members of the Supreme Court to restore the right to life in the laws of this country.

He continued to pray: "Guide lawmakers everywhere to enact laws that protect women and their unborn children, and help them make Missouri and every state in the union a sanctuary of life."

Making history

Mrs. Forck predicted that years from now, children will ask their parents and grandparents what they were doing on Dec. 1, 2021, the day the oral arguments were heard in that historic Supreme Court case.

"Tell them you were standing for life, not only in your homes but out in the public square, which is where we need to be," she said.

Omar Segovia, an ethnic church planting strategist for the Missouri Baptist Convention, closed the rally with prayer.

"May You continue to raise up this pro-life movement, continue to raise up people who stand in the gap, who are going to stand for the Constitution, who are going to stand for life," he prayed.

Then, as the wind whipped up the nearby flags and banners, the group sang two verses of "Amazing Grace."

Daily Readings

Sunday, Dec 12

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Zep. 3:14-18a
(Ps.) Is. 12:2-3, 4, 5-6
Phil. 4:4-7
Lk. 3:10-18

Monday, Dec 13

St. Lucy, virgin and martyr
Nm. 24:2-7, 15-17a
Ps. 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc, 8-9
Mt. 21:23-27

Tuesday, Dec 14

St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church
Zep. 3:1-2, 9-13
Ps. 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23
Mt. 21:28-32

Wednesday, Dec 15

Is. 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25
Ps. 85:9ab, 10-14
Lk. 7:18b-23

Thursday, Dec 16

Is. 54:1-10
Ps. 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b
Lk. 7:24-30

Friday, Dec 17

Gn. 49:2, 8-10
Ps. 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17
Mt. 1:1-17

Saturday, Dec 18

Jer. 23:5-8
Ps. 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19
Mt. 1:18-25

The Holy Father's prayer intentions for December:

Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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"All in Christ" ... "For Pro-Life!"



Members of the St. Stanislaus School chapter of the Life Runners team in Wardsville gather for a morning run outside St. Stanislaus Church Nov. 3 before school. The organization promotes a Christ-centered pro-life message of remembering the unborn.

— Photo from the St. Stanislaus School Facebook page

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

From page 22

One of four hardback books from author Michael R. Heinlein and illustrator Frank Fraser's Teeny Tiny Theology series, *Sacred Scripture* packs a lot of Church history and biblical studies into just a few sturdy pages.

Brightly illustrated with engaging images and text, readers will learn key points about God's word through a brief overview of the key stories, poetry and teachings in the Bible.

Along with *Sacred Scripture*, *The Trinity*, *Salvation History* and *Christology* are included in the Teeny Tiny Theology series. Ages 4-8.

Lordan, a mother to three children, has master's degrees in education and political science and is a former assistant international editor of *Catholic News Service*. She currently teaches and is a court-appointed advocate for children in foster care.

Organist, vocalist to perform Spirit of CHRISTmas in Starkenburg

DATE: December 10, 11
TIME: 2:30 pm

Organist Jonelle Loehnig and vocalist Carrie Kirchhofer-Tilly will return home to the Hermann area for the Spirit of CHRISTmas Concerts at Starkenburg on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 10 and 11.

Both concerts will be held at 2:30 p.m. in the historical St. Martin's Church Museum at Starkenburg.

Mrs. Loehnig, currently Director of Music for St. Peter's United Church of Christ

in New Haven, will work her musical magic on the 1800s Pfeffer Pipe Organ.

Mrs. Kirchhofer-Tilly, a familiar mezzo-soprano voice to many, will perform several solos to well-known holiday songs. She performed with "The Singations" while she was a student at the University of Missouri-Columbia and the "Masterworks Chorale" in Jacksonville, Florida. A graduate of Hermann High School, she continues to share her talents with audiences through her involvement with local theater groups in Peoria,

Illinois, where she and her family reside.

Nancy Kirchhofer will join Mrs. Loehnig and Mrs. Tilly as the narrator. Mrs. Kirchhofer started the Handbell Choir at St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Hermann 15 years ago. She has directed the Mother's Day Show for five years. She has been the narrator of these Spirit of CHRISTmas Concerts since they were inaugurated in 2014.

A donation of \$7 for adults and \$4 for ages 18 and under is suggested.

A Country Store and light refreshments will be offered in Valentine Hall.

Doors open one hour prior to each concert. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. The church museum and hall are handicapped accessible.

St. Martin's Church Museum and Valentine Hall are located at 197 Highway P, northwest of Rhineland, at Starkenburg. From the inter-

section of Highways 94 and 19, just north of Hermann, turn west towards Rhineland. One mile west of Rhineland, take Highway P north for 2 miles to Starkenburg.

For additional information, contact Brenda Van Booven at 573-236-4390 or 314-223-5911 or risensav@ktis.net, or Tammy Bruckerhoff at 573-690-1965 or TourismDirector@VisitHermann.com.

Podcast on Catholic history in Missouri

Monsignor Robert A. Kurwicky, vicar general of the Diocese of Jefferson City, who currently serves as chaplain to the Missouri House of Representatives, joins the Missouri Catholic Conference podcast to discuss the rich and interesting history of the Catholic Church in Missouri.

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