

Ray of Hope, Beauty From Ashes

A devastating fire at Ray of Hope Pregnancy Ministries' Shelbina Center has awakened a renewed commitment from supporters throughout the community.

Page 4



| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Nativity scenes | Page 3 |
| "Love from Above" | Page 5 |
| Thanksgiving table | Page 6 |
| Life in the Spirit | Page 7 |
| RIP, Fr. Phil Luebbert | Page 8 |
| Veterans Day | Page 10 |

December 13, 2019 • Vol. 63 No. 12

The CATHOLIC MISSOURIAN

Newspaper of the Diocese of Jefferson City

Teens' faith catches fire at Catholic Youth conference



Young people from Our Lady of the Lake parish in Lake Ozark display some unusual headware at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis. NCYC, held every other year, consists of three days of inspiration, prayer, fellowship and fun.

— Photo by Kris Hartman

St. Raymond's Society continues thriving, evolving after its first 10 years

By Jay Nies

People witnessing the birth of the St. Raymond's Society 10 years ago would have been astonished to see what it has become today.

It has evolved from an ad hoc coalition assisting pregnant women in crisis into three thriving communities led by professionals who help these mothers reach their highest potential.

"Our goal isn't for them to just be able to 'make it.' We want them to be happy and fulfilled," said Mike Hentges, cofounder of the Columbia-, Jefferson City- and Rolla-based organization.

"We give them an opportunity to find and pursue their life's purpose, to dream of something greater, rather than getting stuck in the 'day to day,' where bad decisions get made," said Steve Smith, another cofounder.

These two men, along with the St. Raymond's Society (SRS) board of directors, staff and a growing network of volunteers, have leveraged prayer, inspiration and limited resources into a refined apparatus for saving lives and restoring futures.

Named for the patron saint of pregnant mothers and pre-born babies, this faith-based nonprofit organization focuses on giving at-risk pregnant mothers what they need — things such as life-skills training, help with a job search or even a place for them and their children to live.

The organization helps mothers and an increasing number of fathers learn to take care of themselves so they can take care of their babies and young children.

See ST. RAYMOND'S SOCIETY, page 17

By Jay Nies

Random hugs and torn trousers. Praise & Worship bands and a Latin schola.

Adorers, confessors, penitents, discerners, seekers and a few who were initially just along for the ride.

These all helped make the 2019 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis an unforgettable experience for the approximately 22,000 teens, adult chaperones and clergy who attended.

"We're talking about God and growing in faith and creating a stronger bond between us and Him," said Paul Wilson, 17, of Holy Spirit parish in Centralia.

"It's like having a whole family of 22,000 people you've never met before, who are willing to listen to your story and share their faith with you and encourage you and love you," said Hannah England, 17, of Sacred Heart parish in Eldon.

They were two of the 480 people from 25 parishes in the Jefferson City diocese who rode 10 buses to Indy for the Nov. 21-23 event.

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight took part in the second and third days' activities, offered Mass for the people of this diocese and joined them for dinner.

"I return to my post, filled with awe, gratitude and a renewed sense of hope," he said. "I can see that God is hard at work forming a new generation of enthused and faithful Catholics to help carry His message of salvation to the ends of the earth."

NCYC, held every other year, consists of three days of inspiration, prayer, fellowship and fun.

This year's theme was "Blessed, Broken and Given" — from the story of

See NCYC, page 14

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Seeking Christ for Our Nation

The next "Seeking Christ for our Nation" Masses will be celebrated on **Tuesday, December 17**, at 6 p.m. in Our Lady of the Snows Church in Mary's Home; and on **Tuesday, January 7**, at 6:30 p.m. in St. George Church in Linn.

Chancery Closings

The chancery offices in the Alphonse J. Schwartze Memorial Catholic Center will be closed after noon on **Friday, Dec. 20**, for a staff gathering. The offices will be closed from noon on **Tuesday, Dec. 24**, through **Thursday, Dec. 26**, for Christmas; and from noon on **Tuesday, Dec. 31**, through **Wednesday, Jan. 1**, for New Years and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

2020 Print publication schedule

One more print edition of *The Catholic Missourian* will be published this year.

It will be dated Friday, Dec. 20.

Here is a list of print issue dates for 2020: Jan. 10 and 24; Feb. 7 and 21; March 6 and 20; April 3 and 17; May 1, 15 and 29; June 12 and 26; July 10 and 24; Aug. 7 and 21; Sept. 4 and 18; Oct. 2, 16 and

30; Nov. 13 and 27; and Dec. 11 and 18.

The advertising deadline is 10 business days prior to the

issue date.

Contact Kelly Martin at (573) 635-9127 or advertize@diojeffcity.org for information.

Sung traditional Mass in Latin, in Mexico

DATE: December 21

TIME: 11:15 am

Father Dylan Schrader will offer a Solemn High Mass in the Extraordinary Form, sung with full ceremonies, at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 21, in St. Brendan Church, 615 S. Washington St. in Mexico.

Sedalia Sacred Heart School seeking 2020 Hall of Fame nominees

Sacred Heart School in Sedalia is accepting nominations through Jan. 4 for outstanding groups and individuals to be inducted into the Sacred Heart School Hall of Fame in 2020.

The Sacred Heart School Hall of Fame's mission is to recognize and honor the extraordinary accomplishments of the members of the Sacred Heart School family and celebrate those who can be looked upon as legitimate role models by current and future Gremlins.

Candidates for strong consideration include alumni who have made a positive impact on the world in which they live during their Sacred Heart years and/or after leaving Sacred Heart.

Candidates also can include groups (such as teams) and non-alumni (SHS faculty, staff, parents, and volunteers) who have in some way made a positive, meaningful and lasting contribution to Sacred Heart School.

Anyone is eligible to submit nominations to the SHS Hall of Fame. Nomination forms must be completed and returned by Jan. 4. Nomination forms are available at Sacred Heart School, Sacred Heart Chapel, or online under the Alumni page at www.gogremlins.com.

Candidates for strong consideration include alumni who have made a positive impact on the world in which they live during their Sacred Heart years and/or after leaving Sacred Heart.

Pray for deceased priests

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

Dec. 19 — **Fr. Guido M. Nardoni**, Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Vienna (1962); **Fr. Leo G. Oligschlaeger**, Assumption, Morrison (1972)

Dec. 21 — **Msgr. Gerold J. Kaiser**, Holy Family, Freeburg (1987); **Fr. Patrick J. Shortt**, Our Lady of the Snows, Mary's Home (2017)

Retiring Birthright of Mid-Mo volunteers lauded for service

Dorothy Veit and Eileen Plassmeyer, longtime members of the Birthright of Mid-Missouri Board of Directors, were honored for their more than 30 years of service to Birthright with a luncheon.

Mrs. Veit, a member of Immaculate Conception parish in Jefferson City, began her tenure with Birthright in 1988, assisting in coordinating services and taking incoming calls for clients seeking help. She took on the role of board member in 2002.

Eileen Plassmeyer, a member of St. Joseph parish in Westphalia, began her service in 1989, coordinating and providing client services. Over the

years, she has served as client intake and advocate, becoming a board member in 1995 and serving as board secretary and communications chair.

"Eileen and Dorothy's commitment to Birthright has provided sustainability and support in continuing the goal of Birthright International," said Jean Wankum, Birthright of Mid-Missouri executive director. "With their dedication, compassion and drive to help our local affiliate, they have made a huge difference for those most in need in this community."

Birthright of Mid-Missouri

See BIRTHRIGHT, page 5

Teaching Positions

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

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

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

Principal — Lee's Summit

Our Lady of the Presentation, a dynamic and growing parish located in Lee's Summit, Mo., seeks a faith-filled principal with proven leadership skills and a commitment to Catholic education for its K-8 grade school serving more than 470 students with approximately 50 staff members.

Our Lady of the Presentation is an accredited, nationally recognized Blue Ribbon elementary school that strives to educate the whole child. Qualified candidates must be a practicing Catholic with Administrative certification or the ability to become certified. Candidates must also have teaching and administration experience.

Applications may be made to the Catholic Schools Office on the website at:

[https://careers.hireology.com/
thecatholicdioceseofkansascitystjoseph/
352738/description](https://careers.hireology.com/thecatholicdioceseofkansascitystjoseph/352738/description)

Applications close on January 15, 2020.

Pilgrimage to the Shrines of French Canada

with Fr. Matthew Flatley

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

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

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Pope asks Catholics to set up, be enchanted by a Nativity scene

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Vatican City

A Nativity scene is a simple reminder of something astonishing: God became human to reveal the greatness of His love "by smiling and opening His arms to all," Pope Francis said in a letter on the meaning and importance of setting up Christmas cribs.

"Wherever it is, and whatever form it takes, the Christmas creche speaks to us of the love of God, the God Who became a Child in order to make us know how close He is to every man, woman and child, regardless of their condition," the Pope wrote in his apostolic letter, *"Admirabile Signum"* ("Enchanting Image").

Pope Francis signed the short letter Dec. 1, the first Sunday of Advent, during an afternoon visit to Greccio, Italy, where St. Francis of Assisi set up the first Nativity scene in 1223.

When St. Francis had a cave prepared with a hay-filled manger, an ox and a donkey — no statues or actors or baby, even — he "carried out a great work of evangelization," Pope Francis said, and Catholics can and must continue that work today.

"With this letter," he wrote, "I wish to encourage the beautiful family tradition of preparing the Nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares."

"It is my hope that this custom will never be lost and that, wherever it has fallen into disuse, it can be rediscovered and revived," the pope said.

At the heart of even the simplest Nativity scene, he said, there is a reminder of "God's tender love: the Creator of the universe lowered Himself to take up our littleness."

Then, he said, there is the fact that this Baby is "the source and sustenance of all life. In Jesus, the Father has given us a brother who comes to seek us out whenever we are confused or lost, a loyal friend ever at our side. He gave us His Son Who forgives us and frees us from our sins."

The magic of the season goes deep when someone — child or adult — gazes upon a Nativity scene, he said. And whether or not they can put what they experience into words, they come away knowing that "God's ways are astonishing, for it seems impossible that He should forsake His glory to become a Man like us."

"To our astonishment, we see God acting exactly as we do: He sleeps, takes milk from His mother, cries and plays like every other child! As always, God baffles us. He is unpredictable, constantly doing what we least expect," Pope Francis wrote.



Pope Francis visits the exhibit, "100 Nativity Scenes at the Vatican," near the Vatican in Rome Dec. 9, 2019.

— CNS photo/Paul Haring

"The Nativity scene shows God as He came into our world, but it also makes us reflect on how our life is part of God's own life. It invites us to become His disciples if we want to attain ultimate meaning in life."

Knowing that some families keep to the essential characters and setting while others add all sorts of characters and buildings and streams and towns, Pope Francis said even "fanciful additions show that in the new world inaugurated by Jesus there is room for whatever is truly human and for all God's creatures."

But he focused in the letter on some key elements, starting with the starry night, the simplicity of the stable and the poverty of the shepherds.

Giving the Nativity scene a nighttime backdrop, he said, respects the Gospel account of Jesus' birth but also serves to remind people of times when they've experienced darkness. The creche, he said, says, "Even then, God does not abandon us, but is there to answer our crucial questions about the meaning of life. Who am I? Where do I come from? Why was I born at this time in history? Why do I love? Why do I suffer? Why will I die?"

"It was to answer these questions that God became Man," the Pope wrote. "His closeness brings light where there is darkness and shows the way to those dwelling in the shadow of suffering."

Him by showing mercy to those of our brothers and sisters in greatest need."

"Jesus, 'gentle and humble in heart,' was born in poverty and led a simple life in order to teach us to recognize what is essential and to act accordingly," he said.

Mary is a model of discipleship, faithfully accepting God's will for her life and sharing Him with others, inviting them to obey Him. Joseph, too, accepts the role God assigned him, protecting the Baby Jesus, teaching Him and raising Him.

And, of course, the Pope wrote, "when, at Christmas, we place the

statue of the Infant Jesus in the manger, the Nativity scene suddenly comes alive. God appears as a Child, for us to take into our arms."

The whole scene, he said, reminds adult Catholics of their childhood and of learning the faith from their parents and grandparents. Each year, it should be a reminder that the faith needs to be passed on to one's children and grandchildren.

Standing together before a Nativity scene, in wonder and awe, he said, is a simple way to start.



Bishop McKnight's Calendar

DECEMBER

- Dec. 12-16** Retreat Master for Diaconate Retreat, Diocese of Honolulu
- Dec. 20** Bishop's Advent Luncheon with Diocesan Staff, Noon, Catholic Center, Jefferson City; St. Andrew Dinner with Prospective Seminarians, 5 pm, Bishop's Residence, Jefferson City
- Dec. 24** Christmas Eve Mass, Cathedral of St. Joseph, Jefferson City, 9:30 pm
- Dec. 27-Jan. 12** Mission Trip to Diocese of Jashpur, India

JANUARY

- Jan. 12-18** Ad Limina, Rome

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Outpouring of support puts Ray of Hope's Shelbina center back in operation after devastating fire

By Jay Nies

The ruins of the Ray of Hope Pregnancy Care Ministries (PCM) Shelbina Center were still smoldering when one of the firefighters asked for more information about the organization's lifesaving work.

"Up until then, he didn't know we existed, but he knew someone who he believed could benefit from our services," said Tessy Fuller, executive director of the Ray of Hope centers in Macon and Shelbina.

An early-morning electrical fire destroyed the center on Nov. 16.

No one was in the building at the time.

Thanks to an outpouring of grace and community support, the center is back up and running, offering its full slate of services in temporary quarters owned by the First Baptist Church of Shelbina.

"The community has been amazing and really pulled together," said Mrs. Fuller. "I can hardly believe that in just a few days after the fire, Ray of Hope PCM will be able to continue to serve clients in Shelby County. It speaks volumes of what a small town is all about."

Right in the middle

Amanda Durbin, a member of St. Mary parish in Shelbina, is president of the Ray of Hope board of directors.

"It was obvious from the beginning that God was right in the middle of all of this," she said.

First Baptist recently moved into a new building. The day of the fire, the congregation offered Ray of Hope the use of some of its vacated space, free of charge.

Volunteers helped move furniture and supplies and get things ready to welcome clients.

The new location is to be open every second Monday of the month from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., or by calling (660) 395-8099 to make an appointment.

Mrs. Fuller noted that the older building works well for now, but a permanent location will eventually need to be found.

"We're not sure yet where God will lead us," she stated, "but we're confident He will reveal that and open those doors sometime in the new year."

An online fundraising campaign, known as "Beauty from Ashes," is under way to help pay for a new, permanent location and for items lost in the fire.

Ray of Hope had just installed new office equipment and remodeled the restroom in the Shelbina building.

"Our insurance covered our electronics and some of our office equipment in there," said Mrs. Fuller, "but didn't cover the majority of the inventory that we had."

Back on the map

Ray of Hope PCM is a non-denominational, nonprofit corporation that offers free pregnancy tests, education and mentorship for those facing an unplanned or unexpected pregnancy and for first-time parents.

The organization helps about 25 families annually.

"We've had nine babies this year that have been born," said Mrs. Fuller. "We also have some who are waiting to be born, and of course we walk with families who have babies up to the age of 2."

Through Ray of Hope's "Earn While You Learn" program, clients are able to complete lessons, earn points, and then "shop" in the Baby Boutique for items they need.

The Boutique is stocked



LEFT: The building that was home to Ray of Hope Pregnancy Care Ministries' Shelbina Center was a complete loss, following a Nov. 16 fire. It was also the place where St. Mary parish stored items to be shipped to Father Dandi Bermejo's missions in the Philippines.



RIGHT: Newly adorned baby items are on display in the "Baby Boutique" for Ray of Hope clients, in the Shelbina center's new, temporary location at First Baptist Church in Shelbina.

— Photos from the Friends of Ray of Hope Pregnancy Care Ministries Facebook page

with donations of diapers, wipes, clothes for the baby, blankets and more.

Many moms save their money for larger items and may even bring the father of the baby with them to learn and earn even more.

Beyond that, Ray of Hope receives funding through Missouri's Alternatives to Abortion (ATA) program, which helps provide for the immediate material needs of pregnant women who are in crisis.

"We get an allotment from the state," Mrs. Fuller explained. "Through the ATA program, we're able to assist with things such as rent or car payments to help our clients get back on their feet."

"A lot of time, they come to us and don't even have a place to live," she noted.

Clients travel from as far as Hannibal, Monroe City and Perry for services.

"That's why it's so important for us to get back on the map and let people know that we're still here, still going, still offering services," she said.

From sadness to joy

Mrs. Durbin completed three difficult pregnancies before her doctor told her and her husband, Dale, that they could have no more children.

Heartbroken at losing out on the big family she always dreamed of, she prayed for God to help her honor Him while working through her grief.

"I asked Him to use me however He could," she said. "I just wanted to serve."

Father Mike Murphy, her pastor at the time, asked her to represent her parish on the Kirksville Deanery's pro-life committee.

Leading the meetings was Stephana Landwehr, who was the diocesan pro-life coordinator.

She told the committee about a woman who prayed on the sidewalk outside the Planned Parenthood abortion clinic in Columbia whenever abortions were being performed there.

Mrs. Durbin and her 2-year-old son began traveling to Columbia to join Kathy Forck in prayer.

She quickly realized that many of the women seeking abortions in Columbia based their decision on a lack of support and tangible resources.

"And it hit me hard that we had neither of those in the area where I live," said Mrs. Durbin.

Mrs. Durbin gave a presentation on the subject at Immaculate Conception parish in Macon, St. Patrick parish in Clarence and her home parish,

St. Mary in Shelbina.

Dr. Landwehr gave her information about spiritual adoption of pre-born babies. With that, the people began praying for individual babies who were in danger of abortion.

Mrs. Durbin organized a baby shower for the unborn babies at sixth months. The response was overwhelmingly generous.

"People brought tons of baby supplies to help new mothers," she recalled. "We didn't know what we were going to do with it all."

Recognizing good momentum, Fr. Murphy asked Mrs. Durbin to meet with likeminded women from several congregations in Macon about starting a permanent ministry to help pregnant women in need.

"We got together and came up with a plan to offer love, support and education for women experiencing a difficult pregnancy and for first-time mothers and fathers who felt they didn't have the tools and resources to be the best parents they could be," she said.

Through that action, "many, many babies have been saved," stated Kathy Forck, coordinator of the Columbia 40 Days for Life Campaign.

See RAY OF HOPE, page 23

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Hundreds of volunteers and international partners gather at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam to assemble boxes for Operation Christmas Drop. The boxes, filled with food, supplies and Christmas toys, will be carried by U.S. Air Force cargo planes and dropped with parachutes from low altitudes over isolated parts of 57 islands in the South Pacific.

— Photo by Father Nicholas Reid

Fr. Reid takes part in Operation Christmas Drop in Guam

Priest of this diocese gives invocation for kickoff of Defense Department's longest-running humanitarian airlift operation

By Jay Nies

A U.S. Air Force chaplain from Camdenton serving in Alaska is spending this week in the Tropics, assisting with a massive humanitarian operation.

Father Nicholas Reid traveled to Guam to take part in the U.S. Air Force's 68th annual Operation Christmas Drop, a mission to deliver donated food, supplies, educational materials and Christmas toys to people in some of the world's most isolated places.

"Communicating with three other nations that don't speak the same language to drop 300-pound crates on 50-meter targets across an island chain that spans a space as wide as the continental United States is no small task, but that's exactly what we're going to do," stated Fr. Reid, a priest of the Jefferson City diocese who is serving as a chaplain at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska.

“Shared humanity”

Fr. Reid was summoned to invoke God's blessing for this year's Operation Christmas Drop during the Dec. 9 kickoff ceremony at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam.

"What might seem to some as just a bundle of supplies attached to a parachute is to others the best human nature has to offer," he stated.

The priest called to mind a phrase from a prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, "It is in giving that we receive."

"Indeed," said Fr. Reid, "how often it is the case that we are encouraged when we help others."

He said that in a world fraught with conflict and division, this Operation affords an opportunity to bring together Air Crew and assistance from across the region to help some 20,000 people.



Capt. Nicholas Reid, 673rd Air Base Wing chaplain, delivers the invocation during the Operation Christmas Drop opening ceremony at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Dec. 9, 2019.

—U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ryan Brooks

He prayed: "In Your mercy, Lord, may our crews be safe in the air, our drops on target on the ground, and our shared humanity strengthened near and far."

“Love from above”

Operation Christmas Drop is the U.S. Defense Department's longest-running humanitarian airlift operation.

It is a cooperative venture among several U.S. Air Force and joint installations in the Southeast Pacific.

According to the Andersen Air Force Base website, the tradition began during the Christmas season in 1952 when a B-29 Superfortress aircrew saw islanders waving at them from the island of Kapingamarangi, 3,500 miles southwest of Hawaii.

In the spirit of Christmas, the aircrew dropped a bundle of supplies attached to a parachute to the islanders below, giving the operation its name.

Today, airdrop operations include more than 50 islands throughout the Pacific — including the Commonwealth of

the Northern Marianas, Federated States of Micronesia, and Republic of Palau.

"These islands are some of the most remote locations on the globe spanning a distance nearly as broad as the continental United States," the Anderson Air Force Base website states.

Volunteers from a private, nonprofit organization raise money and gather the materials for the drop from private donors, charitable organizations and the University of Guam.

A week before the mission unfolds, volunteer Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, civilians, contractors and families assist in picking up and sorting the donations.

Riggers from Yokota AFB and Andersen volunteers build dozens of boxes to hold the sorted materials — mostly school supplies, clothing, rice, fishing equipment and toys.

The boxes are attached to parachutes and loaded aboard massive Air Force cargo planes.

Military personnel transport the boxes to the various island locales and drop them while flying at low altitude.

This provides valuable experience for those who partici-

pate. Low-altitude airdrops are a low-cost way to deliver essential items to isolated places. This makes them a crucial part of the United States military's emergency response to natural disasters throughout the world.

“An amazing reflection”

Fr. Reid said he's grateful to be able to assist "even just a little" in Operation Christmas drop.

"One of the things I really enjoy about the Air Force is the opportunity to impact lives across the globe," he said.

He noted that young Air Force members from throughout the United States take part in the operation, supporting over 56 micro islands in the South Pacific with clothing, canned goods and supplies.

"It is an amazing reflection on and credit to the kind of young men and women who are joining the military," he said.

For more information, visit: www.andersen.af.mil/ocd



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BIRTHRIGHT

From page 2

is a Section 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides confidential information and resources to women.

These services include free pregnancy tests, maternity wear and baby items.

Birthright volunteers offer support and access to available community resource tools addressing prenatal care, child-birth, adoption, child safety, parenting skills and referrals for medical support; financial, legal and employment resources, housing and counseling.

"We believe that it is the right of every child to be born and

supported in our community," stated Mary Davis, Birthright board member. "Along with the community resources we provide, we offer mothers and fathers compassionate support, an ear to listen to help them be independent and strong providers for their families."

Individuals seeking help may call the 24/7 free Helpline at 1-800-550-4900.

The Birthright of Mid-Missouri office is located at 1006 E. High St. in Jefferson City.

For more information or for local services, call (573) 635-8822.

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Family traditions being forged at J.C. parish Thanksgiving Dinner



Many hands make for light work at Immaculate Conception parish's Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Thanksgiving Day.

By Jay Nies

It makes Mike Schnieders happy to see parents bring their children to help with Immaculate Conception parish's community Thanksgiving meal in Jefferson City each year.

It helps reinforce the "giving" in Thanksgiving.

"They're showing their kids that this is part of being thankful — taking care of your brothers and sisters in the community," he said.

Mr. Schnieders and his wife Cindy have been overseeing the massive meal for 11 years.

"It's an amazing event," he said.

This year, scores and scores of volunteers prepared and served a traditional Thanksgiving feast to 1,064 people.

Volunteers delivered about 500 of those meals to people who are homebound in the community.

Approximately 400 more meals were served and sent home with people who dropped by.

Some 70 people dined in the warm confines of the Immaculate Conception School cafeteria.

About 100 more were served in the community room at Dulle-Hamilton Towers apartment complex, where Audrey Kauffmann heads up the serving operation each year.

"This is simply an amazing group of parishioners," said Mr. Schnieders.

Gathered together

It's hard to keep track of the number of volunteers who bring an operation of this magnitude into being.

People sign up to donate food, help prepare it, serve it, deliver it, and clean up.

"We break it down into all kinds of categories, and people can go online and sign up to donate their time," said Mr.

ing to roast the turkeys, then de-bone the meat, slice it, prepare the gravy and refrigerate everything until it's time to serve.

The day before Thanksgiving, Patricia Dohmen, her family and her crew make homemade dinner rolls and prepare the stuffing.

That's also when volunteers peel and mash 420 pounds of



Schnieders.

Parishioner John Bryan works in the poultry industry and asks the Cargill Corporation to donate the turkeys.

The company has graciously done so 11 times.

Volunteers pitch in to prepare the food.

"This year, we cooked about 900 pounds of turkey — which is about 435 pounds once it's cooked," said Mr. Schnieders.

Volunteers arrive in the school kitchen at 6 a.m. on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Our Lord present

The inspiration for all of this came to the Schniederses after they and their children helped prepare and serve a meal at the Salvation Army Center of Hope Shelter in Jefferson City.

"Cindy made the comment that we should do something like that at church, because the need is all around us," Mr. Schnieders recalled.

They talked to Monsignor David Cox, who was pastor at the time, and the first I.C. Thanksgiving dinner was held the following year.

"God has been at the center of this from the very beginning," said Mr. Schnieders. "The Holy Spirit has been in charge. We started this thing to help teach our family the importance of taking care of our neighbors, and look what it's turned into!"

He said that in spite of all the advance preparation, it's "pure madness" in the kitchen on Thanksgiving Day.

"But it's actually the neatest thing," he said. "Really, the most enjoyable part of the whole thing for me is seeing the parishioners, my brothers and sisters in Christ, all pitch in and work hard and get it done."

"God is Who's leading this!" he said. "God is leading the whole charge."

In this celebration

Mr. Schnieders noted that there's always plenty for everyone in the family to do.

"My wife is really good about making a list of jobs for kids of all ages," he said. "Whether it's

folding silverware in napkins — there are all kinds of little jobs so everyone can help."

Several people told him that volunteering for the meal has become a Thanksgiving tradition for their families — and one they plan to continue observing.

Mr. Schnieders sees young people learning from their parents.

"They see their Mom and Dad helping out, they get excited about it and want to keep doing it," he said.

He hopes such opportunities to serve as individuals and as families have a lasting effect.

"It helps reinforce that we really do have to take care of our brothers and sisters in the community, no matter where we are — whether it's Thanksgiving or any other day of the year," he said.

Also on Thanksgiving Day, members and friends of St. Vincent de Paul parish in Sedalia delivered 555 meals and served about 100 more to people in the hall at St. Patrick Chapel.

"We have so many wonderful volunteers to help with the whole process, along with guidance from our loving God!" said parishioner Mary Jo Ballenger.

Volunteers and friends of St. Anthony parish in Camdenton served more than 400 meals — eat-in, carry-out and deliveries — during the parish's 14th annual Caring & Sharing event on Thanksgiving.

Charismatic Renewal has been a wellspring of grace, inspiration for Hispanic Catholics in this diocese

This is the second installment of a two-part article on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Jefferson City diocese:

By Ilsi Palacios

The Hispanic portion of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Jefferson City diocese dates back to July 20-22, 2007.

That weekend, a small group of laypeople led by Ovid and Pedro Almazan convened the first Life in the Spirit (Vida en el Espíritu) seminar at St. Peter parish in Marshall.

The retreat director was Francisco "Panchito" Araujo, with Clarita Valverde assisting.

The community's response was great.

The people were hungry and thirsty for the Word of God, community prayer and the experience of a personal encounter with God the Father, the Risen Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Soon after that weekend, several members of the Hispanic community in Marshall contacted the diocese to ask for Mass to be offered there in Spanish every Sunday instead of once a month.

The community grew in number, in the strength of its faith and in the desire to receive the Eucharist and the other sacraments more frequently.

Father Thomas Alber was assigned to the Marshall parish.

With the support and welcome of Father Kevin Gormley, who was the pastor, the Hispanic Charismatic community began to flourish and grow.

Justo González, who was diocesan director of Hispanic ministry at that time, was instrumental in helping the movement take hold.

Diocesan Hispanic and Cross-cultural Ministries have continued to serve as a bridge between the diocese and the Charismatic Renewal and have provided the support and resources necessary for the growth of the movement.

Thus, the flame of the Holy Spirit began to spread.

Through God's power

From that first Life in the Spirit seminar, new Charismatic prayer groups were formed in the Hispanic communities of Milan, Columbia, Sedalia and Camdenton.

Mr. and Mrs. Almazan were the founders of the prayer group in Marshall. Juan and María Pedroza planted the movement at Sacred Heart in Columbia.

Edwin and Clelia Pacheco got things started at St. Mary in Milan. The founders in Sedalia were Ilsi and José Palacios, and the founders at St. Anthony in Camdenton were Ethan Pérez and Juan Baldomero.

God has been generous and



A banner welcomes people to the 2017 diocesan congress of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, which coincided with the 50th anniversary of the movements beginning in 1967.

— Photos by Jay Nies

groups, the conversion of all those who have decided to undertake a new way of life, and the service of God's hand

to share what they have learned and bring new information back to the people here.

In addition, the diocese ensures that ongoing formation and accompaniment are provided to the movement.

The Diocesan Committee of the Hispanic Charismatic Renewal was established at the diocesan congress in 2015. This committee is made up of leaders representing the different parishes that have a prayer group.

The committee's main objectives are

to support the carrying-out of Life in the Spirit seminars, ensure the unity of the movement in the diocese, provide advice and support for the Charismatic communities and serve as a leaven for the creation and formation of new groups.

"Totally Catholic"

The diocesan congress held

in 2017 in Marshall marked the 50th anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

It was a bilingual congress in collaboration with the Service Team of the Charismatic Renewal for the English-speaking people of the diocese.

The theme was: "Totally Catholic, Totally Charismatic."

The guests were Jim Murphy, who at that time was the international coordinator of the Charismatic Renewal (ICCRS), and Andrés Arango, national Hispanic coordinator.

Bishop Emeritus John R. Gaydos, who led the diocese from 1997 to 2018, celebrated the closing Mass with other priests.

Also in 2017, the Diocesan Committee, supported by an evangelization team made up of members of the various prayer groups, conducted Life in the Spirit Seminars in Camdenton and Columbia and in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

On June 15 and 16 of this year, an evangelization from Marshall organized the first Life in the Spirit Seminar for St. Brendan parish in Mexico. People from Jefferson City, Marshall and Columbia also attended.

"Current of grace"

In these dozen years since the Hispanic Charismatic Renewal movement in the Jefferson City was founded, hundreds of lives have been transformed through the Life in the Spirit seminars, growth retreats, Pentecost vigils, congresses, weekly prayer assemblies and in the sacramental and parish life of the Church.

See CHARISMATIC, page 15



People take part in a prayer service during the 2017 diocesan congress of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, held in Marshall.

shown His immense power in this diocese — just as He did in the experience of Pentecost narrated in the Acts of the Apostles, and as it happened in Duquesne University in Pennsylvania in 1967.

Hundreds of people from the Hispanic communities in this diocese have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in these past 12 years.

In 2009, the first Charismatic Diocesan Congress was held at St. Peter in Marshall, with Mr. Araujo and the Ministry of Music "Los del Camino" returning as guests.

People from the Jefferson City diocese and the neighboring Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph attended.

It was a celebration of the unity among the prayer

in the Church and under the particular charism of the Charismatic Renewal.

Growing family

As a movement within the Catholic Church, the charismatic family is extensive.

In 2010, the movement established ties with the Hispanic Regional and National Renewal Committees. This has enriched the movement here in the diocese.

In 2014 and 2015, about 100 leaders and servants took part in a two-year training course designed by the National Committee and presented with the support of the diocese's Hispanic Ministry office.

Each year, delegates from the diocese participate in the National Renewal Conference

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QUESTION CORNER

Catholic marriage in non-church venues? / Morality and video games

By Father Kenneth Doyle



Catholic News Service

Q. What is the Catholic Church's policy on having a Catholic marriage ceremony (not a Mass) at a reception venue rather than in a church? (My local pastor says that, even if it's just a ceremony, it needs to be in a church.) (Roswell, Georgia)

A. In answering your question, I am going to assume that both the bride and the groom are Catholic. (If, on the other hand, the marriage involved a Catholic and a Protestant, they would have the option to seek from the Catholic diocese a "dispensation," which could allow a Protestant minister to officiate at the ceremony even in a non-church setting.)

For two Catholics, the Church's *Code of Canon Law* notes that normally the wedding is to be held in a parish church, but it does allow the local bishop to "permit a marriage to be celebrated in another suitable place" (Canon 1118.2).

But my experience has been that most dioceses in most situations are reluctant to give permission for a non-church wedding between two Catholics. The Church tries at a wedding to maintain a sense of the sacred; it views marriage as a sacrament, a commitment made in the eyes of God, with the couple seeking the Lord's blessing on their lifelong union.

I am aware, though, that in 2018 the Archdiocese of Baltimore began allowing weddings in non-church settings (including outdoors) with a bit more frequency. (A June 2018 article in *America* magazine noted that, in Baltimore's new policy, the preferred location for weddings was still the home parish of the bride or groom and that locations like bars and nightclubs were still off-limits.)

Q. My son, who is 15, keeps asking for a video game called Grand Theft Auto V. After reading some reviews (gang violence, nudity, extremely coarse language, drug and alcohol abuse), I was not inclined to purchase it for him in good conscience. He's asked now to spend his own money on the game, but I don't want to be responsible for contributing to something that appears to be of no value spiritually or otherwise. Could playing mature-rated video games also be a cause of sin, like watching movies with mature content? (Wichita, Kansas)

A. Video games could of course be an occasion of sin, just as X-rated movies can be. I'll leave aside the issue of violence and simply mention that Adam Lanza, the Sandy Hook shooter, was an avid fan of video violence, as were the Columbine High School perpetrators — though admittedly no one can document a definitive causal connection.

I'm not a patron of video games myself, but I trust the letter-writer's depiction of this one; in fact, the ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board), the industry's highly regarded "watchdog," notes that in Grand Theft Auto V "players use pistols, machine guns, sniper rifles and explosives" to kill rival gang members.

It adds that "the game includes depictions of sexual material/activity: implied fellatio and masturbation (and) various sex acts ... that the player's character procures from a prostitute" with the option for "a topless lap dance in a strip club." Sadly, Grand Theft Auto V's publisher boasted that, in the first three years of this game's existence, they had shipped more than 75 million copies.

Now I ask our readers: Is this the kind of "entertainment" you would want for your 15-year-old son? Our letter-writer acted responsibly in refusing to purchase the video for her son — and she shouldn't let him buy it with his own money, either.

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



Papal Audience

December 11, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

In our catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles, we see how with the passage of time Paul's missionary apostolate is increasingly marked by suffering. His return to Jerusalem exposes him to a fierce persecution. Accused of preaching against the Law and the Temple, he is arrested and put in chains. After being interrogated by the Sanhedrin, Paul is taken to Caesarea where the Governor Felix and King Agrippa hear his case. Finally, having appealed to the Emperor, he begins his journey to Rome. In all this, St. Luke brings out the similarity between Paul and Jesus, and presents Paul's sufferings as themselves an eloquent proclamation of the crucified and Risen Lord. Indeed, his love for Christ made his chains of captivity an instrument for spreading the liberating power of the Gospel. May Paul's example of perseverance amid trials, and his ability to view everything with the eyes of faith, strengthen us in fidelity, and confirm us in our vocation to be missionary disciples and witnesses to the joy of the Gospel.

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 Savior at Christmas. May God bless you!

Father Philip Luebert, 71, had strong ties to this diocese

By Marty Denzer

Kansas City

Father Philip Henry Luebert, 71 — a priest of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, who had strong ties to Maries and Miller Counties in the Jefferson City diocese — died just after midnight Oct. 17, at his home at the Little Sisters of the Poor Jeanne Jugan Center in Kansas City.

He had been serving there as chaplain since mid-2018. He was 71.

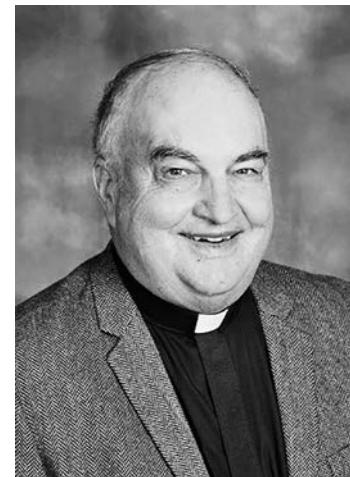
The funeral Mass was celebrated at Nativity of Mary Church in Independence, with Bishop James V. Johnston Jr. presiding and by Father Robert Stone, pastor of Nativity of Mary parish, concelebrating.

Many priests of the Kansas City-St. Joseph diocese and Benedictine priests of Conception Abbey in Conception and Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, were in attendance.

Benedictine Abbot Benedict Neenan of Conception Abbey preached the homily.

Fr. Luebert was born Sept. 24, 1949 in Springfield, a son of Leo and Celia Luebert, both of whom had grown up in what is now the Jefferson City diocese.

The Lueberts moved to Independence when he was a child.



**Father Philip H. Luebert
(1949-2019)**

After graduating from Nativity of Mary grade school, he attended St. John's Minor Seminary in Kansas City. He then attended Conception Seminary College for his freshman and sophomore years before transferring to St. Benedict's College in Atchison for his final two years.

He was in the last St. Benedict's College class (1971) before St. Benedict's merged with Mount St. Scholastica College in 1972 and was renamed Benedictine College.

He continued his seminary formation at St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, for his first two years of theology.

"Despite my enthusiasm," he later recalled, "things didn't work out and I left in 1973."

Health problems and his

own uncertainty got in the way.

"But I kept my interest in the Priesthood over the next 33 years," he later recalled.

In his 40s, he began applying to different dioceses but was turned down because of his age. In a Dec. 2013 article in *Catholic Digest*, he recalled his spiritual advisor, Benedictine Father Alexander Luetkemeyer — who grew up in Freeburg in this diocese — suggesting that before he gave up the search to write to the Pope.

Two weeks after mailing that letter, a very surprised Phil Luebert received a letter from the apostolic nuncio in Washington, D.C., telling him the Pope could not help him directly, but promising to pray for him.

Pope John Paul II kept his promise and just a short time later, things started falling into place for Phil.

At age 56, he approached then-Bishop Robert W. Finn of Kansas City-St. Joseph to request sponsorship to Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut.

On May 29, 2010, Bishop Finn ordained him and two other men to the Priesthood in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Kansas City.

Fr. Luebert was 60.

See FR. LUEBBERT, page 11

When it comes to giving, less is more

By Laura Kelly Fanucci
Catholic News Service



Every year my sister and I make the same promise to each other. "One year, we're not going to do presents at all," we declare over the phone. "And it will be the best Christmas ever."

Our kids are all still at home, eager Christmas lovers, so we haven't yet been able to make good on our dreams of a gift-free holiday. But I daydream of a December free from shopping lists and shipping stress.

I know I'm not alone. The average American will spend \$700 on Christmas gifts this year. This season of cheer is also an overload of consumption.

Ironically, the greatest gifts on the first Christmas were given freely. Mary and Joseph's love for Jesus. The shepherds' wonder. The angels' glorious song. The star's guiding light. The goodness of God incarnate.

Could we celebrate Christmas by giv-

ing less to each other and keeping the focus on faith and family?

It can be tricky to transform long-standing traditions, especially when it comes to the holidays. But it also brings a breath of fresh air to let the Holy Spirit inspire our exchanges of love in new ways.

Years ago, our family switched to celebrating the octave of Christmas. Now we open one present each morning for the eight days from Dec. 25 through Jan. 1. The kids love this tradition, running downstairs every morning to see what small surprise might be waiting under the tree.

Rather than buy each child eight presents, we've found that we can fill up the octave with gifts from grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles and siblings. We start with stockings on Christmas morning and then add a few gifts from us: books for everyone one day, a surprise outing another night.

Switching to the octave — from one manic morning of unwrapping — has been such a gift for our family. We get to stretch out the Christmas celebration. We avoid the Dec. 26 "letdown." We've put the focus back on enjoying time together.

If you've ever felt stressed by December shopping (or felt the regret from credit card statements in January), consider bringing this question to prayer: How does my celebration of Christmas honor the Christ Child — the humble Baby born into poverty?

Might the Spirit whisper ways that you could celebrate differently this year?

Here are a few ideas to ponder.

— Give to others first. Prioritize your charitable giving before deciding how much to spend on family and friends.

— Simplify your gift-giving. Buy secondhand or fair trade items. Try homemade gifts or regifting something you own. (Our extended family has found more fun with a goofy gift exchange — limited to things we already own or purchases under \$10 — than with anything else on Christmas Day.)

— Give the gift of time. Sharing an experience with a loved one brings more lasting memories than most presents we can wrap. (Hint for grandparents: A museum membership or tickets to an event

can be a welcome alternative, especially when parents feel overwhelmed by the influx of new toys.)

— Follow an easy formula for kids if you can't resist buying gifts: something they want, something they need, something to wear and something to read. Four simple categories for fun.

However you choose to celebrate Christmas, let your faith guide your giving. Buying less is a great first step: to focus on Christ, resist greed and bring relief to your budget and the environment.

"Christmas is preferring the silent voice of God to the noisiness of consumerism," said Pope Francis.

When it comes to giving, we need this Good News — now more than ever.

Fanucci is a mother, writer and director of a project on vocation at the Collegeville Institute in Collegeville, Minnesota. She is the author of several books, including "Everyday Sacrament: The Messy Grace of Parenting," and blogs at www.motheringspirit.com.

REFLECTION

Isaiah, Jeremiah and me

By Mark Saucier

Advent is simple, unpretentious and sadly ignored. I often hear, "I can't believe it's almost Christmas." No one, however, seems concerned about the dwindling days of Advent.

Advent focuses on the Old Testament, particularly on the prophets proclaiming a coming Messiah. Of that day, Isaiah says, "For a child is born to us, a son is given to us... They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father Forever, Prince of Peace."

These words feed the anticipation of Advent, but the prophets also suggest we are going to have to go much deeper to realize its promise.

Walter Brueggemann says that the prophets followed a pattern. They first named the reality the people were facing. They grieved for their people in their darkness. Only then did they deliver those words of hope.

We might do well to make that our Advent path.

The joy of Christmas is great, but it can mask other things going on in our lives. If we are honest, it is not always "the hap-, hap-, happiest time of the year."

There are those who have lost someone. There are couples on the brink. There is a woman with an unwanted pregnancy and another who can't conceive. Someone who can't get up without a drink and another who can't sleep without a pill.

A young girl sees no meaning and an old man has outlived his. There are parents who can't control their kids, and kids who can't care for their parents. There is unwanted news from the doctor, the plumber, the school, or the bank.

The prophets taught us that it is not enough to name the troubles. We have to admit all that we harbor because of them: the terrors that stalk, the anger that festers, the envy that eats away, the loneliness that imprisons, and the depression that paralyzes.

What we need is hope, but that doesn't come from words on a page, not even Isaiah's.

Hope comes from standing knee-deep in the pain and realizing that we cannot do it alone.

There in the silence and suffering, there in the smoldering ashes of our lives, is the fruit of Advent.

That is when we find Emmanuel, God with us.

That's when, Isaiah assures us "the spirit of the Lord is upon me...to place those who mourn in Zion a diadem instead of ashes, to give them oil of gladness instead of mourning, a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit."

Happy holy days

By Richard Doerflinger
Catholic News Service



Is it my imagination, or has the Christmas shopping season (or "holiday shopping season") extended itself by another few weeks?

What we used to call "Black Friday" sales, beginning the day after Thanksgiving, seem to be creeping back toward early November.

So we are heading toward an amorphous two-month "holiday season" — not much consolation to those who will be working harder than ever during these months, either to sell us presents or to earn enough money to buy them (or both). Some holiday.

And Thanksgiving may increasingly lose its meaning, merely marking the halfway point in the commercial frenzy. It's an embarrassing holiday for secularists anyway. Who or what can they thank? And ugh, Puritans are involved.

Last year, I was pleasantly surprised to be greeted by some grocery store cashiers with "Merry Christmas." I'm pretty sure this year it will be "Happy Holidays." And I'm tempted to confuse my greeter by replying "Happy Holy Days!", which has the advantage of covering both Christmas and Hanukkah.

So I have some practical tips for keeping one's sanity during this Advent and Christmas.

First, be countercultural by setting your Christmas clock differently. Dec. 1 begins Advent, which means "It's coming!"

We await the first coming of Jesus in the manger, with an eye toward His second coming in glory. Hold off with Christmas decorations until Advent begins. (This may be hard if you have small children.)

See Christmas day as the beginning (not the end) of festivity and gift-giving. On or near the 12th day of Christmas, hold an Epiphany party (you can tell your secular friends it's an "after Christmas" party).

People may ask why you're doing things this way. Then you get to tell them. This is how evangelization begins.

Second, find ways to keep the religious meaning of the season before your eyes.

Pray, in ways and at times you usually don't. The periodical *Magnificat* has a shortened version of morning and evening prayer for every day. Each day, with your loved ones, pray Mary's own Magnificat ("My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord"), thanking God for choosing her as mother of the Savior and for overturning the schemes of the rich and mighty.

Try some spiritual reading. *Watch for the Light* by Plough Publishing House has a reading by a great Christian writer for each day from Nov. 24 to Jan. 7. Each year, Bishop Robert E. Barron issues a

See DOERFLINGER, page 18

Priest encourages veterans to inspire young people, remain engaged in society

By Jay Nies

A wave of patriotic colors rolled past the third-graders of St. Peter Interparish School in Jefferson City.

Representatives of various local veterans' organizations processed into church, venerated the altar and placed their flags in a row near the sanctuary.

It was St. Peter parish's Holy Name Society's Veterans Day Mass and Prayer Service, a decades-old tradition.

"I think it's nice to celebrate the veterans today because they served our country, so we should celebrate with them at Mass," third-grader Olivia Peters commented afterward.

"Like my mom says during parades, 'Thank you for your service!'" said third-grader Alison Amick.

Parishioners and veterans, many dressed in regalia pertaining to their past military service, occupied the pews.

An arctic blast made for a patriotic trifecta that morning in the Capital City, with blue hands and red noses accented by the glistening white substance falling from the sky.

All of this set an appropriate mood for what Catholics also celebrate as the feastday of St.



LEFT: Representatives of various veterans organizations carry flags and banners into the aisle of St. Peter Church in Jefferson City during the parish's Holy Name Society's annual Veterans Day Mass and Prayer Service. **RIGHT:** Monsignor Robert A. Kurwicki, vicar general for the diocese and pastor of St. Michael parish in Russellville, preaches the homily.

— Photos by Jay Nies

Martin of Tours, "the Soldier Saint," with his ties to winter.

"While the weather isn't particularly warm, our hearts are warm, because we are celebrating with our veterans," said Monsignor Robert A. Kurwicki, vicar general for the diocese and pastor of St. Michael parish in Russellville.

He told of how St. Martin, a fourth-century son of a Roman soldier stationed in present-day Hungary, followed his father into military service as a member of the cavalry.

Once while making his military rounds on a horse, young Martin caught sight of a sick, weak-looking beggar, freezing in the cold, sleet and ice.

The future saint took his sword, cut his own heavy riding cloak down the middle and

placed half of it around the cold stranger.

That night, he had a dream — "more like a vision," said Msgr. Kurwicki — of that beggar, wearing the cloak.

"He looked closely at the beggar, and do you know Whose face he saw? The face of Jesus!" the priest stated.

"Talk about service"

Msgr. Kurwicki noted that this year's Veterans Day marked the 101st anniversary of the end of World War I.

"Many individuals fought and died on both sides of that war," he noted. "They said this was 'the War to End All Wars,' but sadly, it was not."

He said Mass on Veterans Day is a chance for people to do three important things: worship God, pray for all veterans and their families, living and deceased, and cultivate hope and gratitude.

He said veterans share four special responsibilities:

- 1) to continue to **honor** their country by presenting themselves in a dignified manner to their family, the Church and the public, staying active in veterans affairs, assisting fellow veterans in need, praying for the souls of deceased veterans, and comforting their families;

- 2) to **stay connected** with the culture, speaking up about the good work they participated in during their military service.

"Because without the good

work of veterans, where would we be today?" the priest inquired. "Where would our country be? What kind of a

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

world would we live in? It would be downright frightening."

- 3) to **inspire** young men and women to consider entering military service.

"When you see those kids, explain to them your medals," he said. "Explain to them where you were. Explain to them what you did."

- 4) to help **educate** young people and the rest of the public about love for God and country.

"Don't be afraid to talk about service, sacrifice and difficulty," said Msgr. Kurwicki. "Talk to people who don't have military experience. When they ask questions, don't be embarrassed to answer them."

He said every veteran has been decorated with the medal of peace — a gift to humanity that isn't always appreciated.

"Peace of mind, peace of heart, peace in our country — so many men and women fought and died to secure a peace that we hold and should never take for granted," the priest stated.

"The Lord has brought us here today to commemorate and thank and pray for all those who were willing to make the supreme sacrifice for the nation," he said.

"Let us offer our prayers for these individuals, to thank God for them, to thank God for their families, to thank God for those who are still healing and recovering, and for those who need our prayers the most."

Giving thanks

Parishioners, several in full military dress, served in liturgical roles at the Mass, including as greeters, altar servers, lectors and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

Members of the choirs of St. Peter, Cathedral of St. Joseph and Immaculate Conception parishes joined in stirring renditions of "America the Beautiful," "For the Healing of the Nations," and "the Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Representatives of veterans' organizations and auxiliaries and local law enforcement agencies carried flags and banners in the procession past an honor guard of Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus from the

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

See VETERANS, page 23

Holy Eucharist was focus of men's retreat at Laurie shrine

By Dr. Fred Boley

Living the Faith has often been compared to a journey, and men in Laurie recently had a vivid reminder of this metaphor.

Members of St. Patrick parish enjoyed a walking pilgrimage and retreat at the National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church, on Oct. 19.

The shrine, with its beautiful fountains and celebrated sculpture of the Blessed Mother under her title of Mary, Mother of the Church, is located on the landscaped hill behind St. Patrick Church, near the Lake of the Ozarks.

"It was great to get closer to God and closer to Christian friends," said Jim Gerke, one of several Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus who took part in the retreat.

The retreat was sponsored by the Men of St. Joseph (MOSJ), a prayer group that meets each Wednesday morning in St. Patrick Church.

The group prays the Psalms together, then reads and discusses the readings for the next Sunday's Mass.

"The Men of St. Joseph gives us a chance to improve our faith together," said MOSJ president Robert Miller.

A hike and a procession

Retreat attendees gathered at the parish's original stone church on Highway O for Morning Prayer, led by Father John Schmitz, pastor at St. Patrick parish and the St. Philip Benizi mission in Versailles, and spiritual director of the national shrine.

FR. LUEBBERT

From page 8

That August, he celebrated five Masses of Thanksgiving on consecutive days in Holy nGuardian Angels Church in Brinktown, where his mother, the late Celia (Buechter) Luebbert, was a parishioner and where his father, the late Leo Luebbert, had served Mass and received his first sacraments as a child.

Mrs. Luebbert grew up in St. Anthony.

At ordination, Fr. Luebbert received the chalice that had belonged to his friend, Fr. Luetkemeyer.

"He was a really good friend when I was in the seminary the first time," Fr. Luebbert stated in 2010. "Years later, he was my spiritual director. He was a very positive influence on my vocation discernment."

Fr. Luebbert served as associate pastor of St. John LaLande parish in Blue Springs. Later, as

pastor of St. Ann parish in Plattsburg and then of Sacred Heart parish in Hamilton, he also ministered with distinction to residents of the Crossroads Correctional Center, a maximum-security prison in Cameron.

Bishop Johnston appointed him resident chaplain at Little Sisters of the Poor in Kansas City two years ago.

Diagnosed with cancer, he continued ministering through treatment and until he died this October.

Mrs. Denzer associate editor of The Catholic Key, newspaper of the Kansas City-St. Joseph Diocese.

Some of the information in this version of her article came from a 2010 article by the late Kevin Kelly and the late Father Joseph Welschmeyer.



Members of the Men of St. Joseph prayer group at St. Patrick parish in Laurie join their pastor, Father John Schmitz, and Dr. Gregory Mary Thompson in an outdoor procession of the Most Blessed Sacrament during a men's pilgrimage and retreat.

— Photos by Dr. Fred Boley

The men then hiked two miles through the Ozark woodlands to the shrine, praying a Rosary together and chatting on the way.

Upon arriving, they were refreshed with coffee and doughnuts, courtesy of Jim Skelly, in the parish hall.

The retreat also included Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament and a beautiful Eucharistic procession and blessing, with torchbearers, incense, a crucifix and an honor guard of Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus.

"We have all heard that many within the Church do not understand that Jesus is really present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Holy Eucharist, so we wanted to make a point of giving honor to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament," said MOSJ vice president Dr. Fred Boley.

"It's really Him in the monstrance!" Dr. Boley added.

The procession was also meant to be a witness to the community at large of the great love and respect the Church has for Jesus in the Eucharist. "Adoration and procession gives us the chance to honor Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament," said Fr. Schmitz. "It is a privilege to adore the Real Presence of Jesus — Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. And it's a privilege to show the community how much we love and honor Jesus."

Repentance and devotion

Dr. Gregory Mary Thompson, Eucharistic Apostle of Divine Mercy, of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, addressed attendees on masculinity and its challenges for modern-day Catholics.

He encouraged the men to take the lead in humility and

prayer within their families.

Dr. Thompson distributed free books to help and encourage attendees in their devotion to Jesus and the Church.

Attendees prayed a chaplet of Divine Mercy together, and Stations of the Cross, before enjoying a time of reflection, an examination of conscience, and confession.

"There was a long line!" said Mr. Miller.

The retreat concluded with the attendees attending Mass together at St. Patrick.

"It's a good chance to get off the expressway and think

about where you're going," Jim Stoltz remarked.

Dennis Dorman added: "It gave me an opportunity to go on a journey with fellow Catholic men to get to know each other better, and to spend a day on a faith journey with fellow Knights and Catholic brothers."

MOSJ plans to organize another retreat during Lent, and invites all men of the diocese to journey with them.

The St. Patrick chapter of MOSJ meets every Wednesday at 7 a.m. in St. Joseph's Hall at St. Patrick Church in Laurie.

March for Life theme points to suffragist centennial

Catholic News Service

Washington, D.C.

The March for Life, the annual march in Washington to protest legalized abortion in the United States, is tying itself in 2020 to the women's suffrage movement for the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

The theme of the march is "Life Empowers: Pro-Life Is Pro-Woman."

Jeanne Mancini, head of the March for Life, remarked how two noted suffragists of their day, Alice Paul and Susan B. Anthony, were themselves staunchly against abortion.

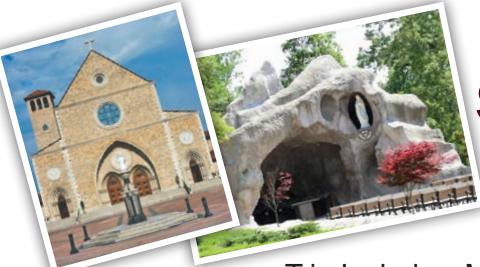
A video made to support the upcoming march, to be held

Jan. 24, said the women called abortion "the ultimate exploitation of women."

Mancini said speakers lined up for the pre-march gathering include Louisiana State Sen. Katrina Jackson, a pro-life Democrat who authored a bill in 2014 to require abortion doctors to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals.

It was ruled unconstitutional in 2017, but that ruling in *Jane Roe v. Wade* was reversed by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The U.S. Supreme Court said in October it would take up the case, its first abortion-related case since the death of Antonin Scalia and the retirement of Anthony Kennedy.



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Great faith sprouts from small, humble actions

Catholic News Service

Vatican City

God makes His presence known not by those who claim to have great faith but by those who are little and humble, Pope Francis said. Priests, bishops and laypeople who "do not take on this path of littleness" will fall like the Christians of the past who "sought to impose themselves with force, greatness and by conquering," the Pope said in his homily Dec. 3 during morning Mass at Domus Sanctae Marthae. "The Kingdom of God sprouts in the small things, always in the small things, the small seed, the seed of life," he said. Celebrating the memorial of St. Francis Xavier, the Pope reflected on the day's Gospel reading in which Jesus praises God for having hidden His divine revelation from the wise and instead "revealed them to the childlike." Littleness, the Pope said, is where "redemption, revelation, the presence of God in the world begins."

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Pope returns part of relic of Jesus' crib to Holy Land

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Vatican City

As Advent approached, Pope Francis gave a small fragment of Jesus' crib back to Catholics in the Holy Land.

In Bethlehem, West Bank, Franciscan Father Rami Asakrieh of St. Catherine Church welcomed the relic's return and called it "a great blessing."

"This is more blessings for this place," he said. "You can't imagine the great joy to have this blessing."

On Nov. 22, experts from the Vatican Museums extracted a small fragment from the relic of what has been venerated as Jesus' manger.

The relic, given to the Vatican in the seventh century, has been kept in a chapel under the basilica's main altar.

Pope Francis gave the relic fragment to the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, which oversees the main churches and shrines associated with the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The relic arrived in Jerusalem Nov. 29 and was present during a Mass celebrated by the nuncio, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, in the chapel of Our Lady of Peace at the Notre Dame Center.

After the Mass and time for people to venerate the relic, the Franciscan friars carried it in procession to the Church of

St. Saviour, where they recited vespers.

The relic was transferred to Bethlehem Nov. 30 to be in place for beginning of Advent Dec. 1.

"May the return to Bethlehem of this piece of holy wood arouse in us the profound desire to be bearers of God. Now it is our hearts that are a manger: the holy crib of God made man," said Archbishop Girelli, apostolic nuncio to Israel and Cyprus and apostolic delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine, at the handing-over ceremony to the Franciscan friars at Jerusalem's Notre Dame Center.

Franciscan Father Francesco Patton, custos of the Holy Land, said the relic would be used to "rekindle faith in Jesus between the different Christian communities of the Holy Land."

Local Catholics in Bethlehem had the opportunity to venerate the relic at Mass at St. Catherine's Dec. 1 before the relic was put away until a proper location and protocol for it can be arranged.

Meanwhile, as Christmas approached, the opening hours of the Church of the Nativity adjacent to St. Catherine had been extended by three hours to 8 p.m. to accommodate the influx of pilgrims who sometimes had to wait up to four hours to go down to the grotto where, according to Christian tradition, Jesus was born.



Franciscan Father Rami Asakrieh holds a reliquary containing what is believed to be a small fragment of Jesus' crib Dec. 1, 2019, in the Franciscan Church of St. Catherine, which is adjacent to the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, West Bank. Pope Francis gave the relic fragment to the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, which oversees the main churches and shrines associated with the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus.

— CNS photo/Debbie Hill

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LEFT: Teens from the Jefferson City diocese settle in for one of the general sessions in the Lucas Oil Stadium during the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis.

— Photo from Our Lady of the Lake parish's Facebook page

RIGHT: A choir made up of young people from the diocese lead the singing at Mass with Father Paul Clark and the 480 people who traveled to NCYC from here.

— Photo by Phyllis Emmel

NCYC

From page 1

two disciples who met Jesus on the Road to Emmaus the day He rose from the dead (Luke 24:13-35).

He set their hearts on fire with His preaching from Scripture, but they did not recognize Him until He sat down to eat with them, blessed the bread, broke it and gave it to them.

"These young people entered into that story fully throughout the week," said John DeLaporte, diocesan director of youth ministry and religious education.

For many teens from this diocese, it was a sacred pilgrimage, a moment of encounter and a new beginning.

"I feel like I'm being changed," said Taylor Carrico, 15, a sophomore from Holy Spirit in Centralia. "I know I've learned and grown so much in my faith."

"I hope to spend more time praying and spreading the word and helping others find

God and honoring Him," she said.

"I will remember these experiences for years and years to come," said Halle Jenkins, 15, a member of Sacred Heart parish in Eldon and a sophomore

she said.

Her friend, Hannah England, took to heart the advice often repeated at NCYC to turn her gaze outward and focus less on herself.

"You have to read Scripture and have a strong prayer life," she said. "And when you're having doubts, turn to God in prayer and rely on the Blessed Mother's intercession."

Hannah Pendergast, 17, of Holy Spirit in Centralia, was on her second NCYC. This time, she felt the effects of the grace she received in confirmation three weeks previously.

"I feel like I've really connected with my faith, and I want to do more," she said. "Getting confirmed and then going here, it really makes me want to read the Bible more and pray more and help other people more."

Lost baggage

Father Paul Clark, asso-



Catholic contemporary Christian music group For King and Country prepares to take the stage during the first night of the National Catholic Youth Conference.

— Photo by Maureen Quinn

at Helias Catholic High School in Jefferson City.

"It's so neat and interesting and fun to be around so many people who believe what I do,"

ciate pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes parish and a chaplain at Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School in Columbia, offered Mass for the people from the diocese after all the buses arrived.

He recalled first attending NCYC when he was a freshman in high school.

"One thing I remember is being from a small town in Missouri and getting to meet up with so many Catholic young people," he said.

"It's a reminder that the Church is bigger than me, bigger than my parish, bigger than our diocese," he said. "We are members of a universal body and a universal Church."

He urged everyone to choose one piece of "baggage" to let go of in order to be freer to enter into the NCYC experience.

"Let go of the distractions that hold you back," he said. "Whatever we let go of at this conference, God will accept that gift, sanctify it and use it to help us enter more fully into a relationship with Him."

Torn jeans

The throngs in the concourses of the Lucas Oil Stadium and the exhibit halls of the Indianapolis Convention Center did not disappoint the teens from Missouri.

"It's impressive that we're surrounded by so many people who share our beliefs," said

Paul Wilson. "It really warms my heart."

"We got to meet people from all over the country," said Payton Kirchoff, 16, a sophomore at Helias Catholic High School and member of Cathedral of St. Joseph parish in Jefferson City.

The teens followed an ambitious itinerary of keynote presentations, thought-provoking breakout sessions, service projects and Masses with beautiful, inspiring music and preaching.

"It's like everyone is on Cloud 9 every day," said Bradley Werkmeister, 15, of Holy Spirit in Centralia. "It's a place where everyone can be open. Not a single person in the group had to worry about standing up for what they believe in."

Young people spent time milling through the acres-large exposition area filled with music, booths, experiences and service opportunities, making friends and exchanging hugs with strangers.

Some attended a traditional sung High Mass in Latin in the church across the street.

Payton Kirchoff, having served at Mass with Bishop McKnight back home, was chosen to introduce him to 20,000 people during one of the assemblies in the stadium.

"The lights were shining in our eyes so you really couldn't

See YOUTH, page 15

YOUTH

From page 14

see that far into the crowd," he said. "It was like looking out and nobody was there."

But he could hear them cheer.

Bradley Werkmeister tore his jeans on a slide in the exhibit area right before the closing Mass. He bought a pair of NCYC pajamas at a nearby booth and put them on.

"I've never felt so underdressed for Mass in my entire life!" he said.

New beginnings

Many of the teens found joy and inspiration in adoring Christ fully present in the Most Blessed Sacrament and in going to confession on Friday night.

"I felt my faith grow through confession," said Anna Million, 15, of Holy Spirit in Centralia. "It's amazing how you feel when you have that weight lifted from your shoulders."

"One of the priests told us it's like you're reborn whenever you go to confession," said Hannah Pendergast. "That's pretty much how I felt afterward."

"It touched my heart and changed me forever," said Taylor Carrico. "I felt so free, and so much was lifted off my chest. I could tell that God was there with me."

"I did not expect to cry, but I did," said Halle Jenkins. "I was so happy to be forgiven and to be with all of my friends and just be here in Indianapolis."

Bradley Werkmeister's con-

fessor told him to place himself in God's presence and then offer up five prayers that start with, "Lord, show me the way..."

That opened the door to one of the most intimate prayer experiences he's ever had.

"Just sitting there in the stadium, surrounded by 20,000 kids around my age in front of the Eucharist in Adoration, it just felt incredible," he said. "I was talking to God more personally than I ever had."

Icing on the cake

Mr. DeLaporte said there's much more to NCYC than the crowds and spectacle.

"The event's organizers put some of the very best ministry practices to use for all of us to see," he said. "They're very intentional about integrating the traditional Catholic prayer and spirituality with contemporary worship, and they did it really well."

"That really resonates with the young people," he added.

He said teens often return home from events such as NCYC with a desire to go deeper in their faith.

"When parish life and ministry respond, NCYC can truly compel discipleship," he said. "In that way, NCYC is the icing and the ministry of the parish is the cake. When both are present faith is both



Bishop W. Shawn McKnight joins several people from the Jefferson City diocese in trying out unusual hats at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis. NCYC, held every other year, consists of three days of inspiration, prayer, fellowship and fun.

— Photo by Kris Hartman

ignited, deepened and sustained."

Lasting change

Young people at NCYC 2019 emphasized that they don't want to leave what they experienced behind.

They want to be different and help make the world different.

"The way to keep the passion burning and the light burning bright would be through an increase in prayer and going to Mass and confession regularly and just trying to get more out of every day on this planet with our God,"

said Bradley Werkmeister.

"Just one more kind act, or committing to go to Mass more, or being more attentive to who you're hanging out with — these small things can add up to big changes," said Payton Kirchoff.

Anna Million said she plans on praying more, reading the

Bible more and spending more time with people who know she's Catholic and expect the best from her.

"Everyone needs to continue growing and learning and working to put your vices and struggles behind you," she said.

Helping to plan

Bishop McKnight said he was proud of the teens from this diocese at NCYC.

"The youth are not merely the Church of tomorrow, but they are very much part of the Church today," he stated.

At a gathering of NCYC participants, he urged the teens to participate in the development of a new diocesan pastoral plan by attending a youth summit with him next May.

"We will look at how to improve cooperation between clergy and laity; fostering the spirituality of stewardship and individual discipleship; and transforming parishes into centers of charity and mercy," he told them.

Archbishop Sheen beatification postponed

Catholic News Service

Peoria, Illinois

Bishop Daniel R. Jenky of Peoria said Vatican officials have told him that the upcoming beatification of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen has been postponed.

A news release from the Diocese of Peoria said it was informed Dec. 2 that Vatican had decided to postpone the Dec. 21 ceremony "at the request of a few members" of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Details on what prompted the bishops to intervene were unknown.

The diocese added, "In our current climate it is important for the faithful to know that there has never been, nor is there now, any allegation against (Archbishop) Sheen involving the abuse of a minor."

Pope Francis Nov. 18 approved the beatification ceremony for the popular archbishop, whose television program attracted millions of viewers nationwide and continues to be viewed in reruns in some markets.

"The Diocese of Peoria has no doubt that Fulton Sheen, who brought so many souls to Jesus Christ in his lifetime, will be recognized as a model of holiness and virtue," the statement added.

The diocese said Bishop Jenky was "deeply saddened" by the Vatican's decision.

CHARISMATIC

From page 7

Many have definitely rediscovered a continuous Pentecost, as Pope St. John Paul II said, in his homily for the celebration of First Vespers of Pentecost in 2004:

"Thanks to the Charismatic Movement, a multitude of Christians, men and women, young people and adults have rediscovered Pentecost as a living reality in their daily lives. I hope that the spirituality of Pentecost will spread in the Church as a renewed incentive to prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation."

The sainted Pope's words have been prophetic throughout the world and continue to echo in the diocese.

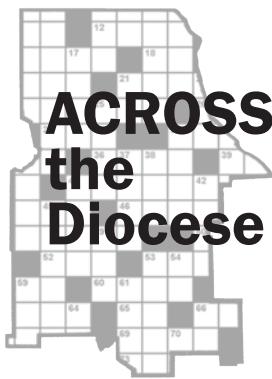
With the emergence of the movement in 2007, evangelization has continued here and beyond the

borders of the diocese, announcing the Good News to many.

With the support of Bishop W. Shawn McKnight; the diocesan director of Hispanic and Cross-Cultural Ministry; and the parish priests serving the various communities, the evangelization continues year after year, as Pope Francis requested in 2015 at the Third Worldwide Priest's Retreat:

"I ask each and all of you that as part of the current of grace of Charismatic Renewal, you organize seminars of Life in the Spirit in your parishes and seminaries, schools, in neighborhoods, to share Baptism in the Spirit."

Encouraged by these words of Pope Francis and with the Power of the Holy Spirit, the Renewal advances its commitment to evangelization.



By Father Don Antweiler
ACROSS

1. Some towns/cities in Mo. have nicknames, formal or informal; some don't. Jefferson City does, often being referred to as The Capitol City. However, many just refer to it as ____ City.
5. Sumner, Mo. refers to itself as the Wild ____ Capital of the World, thanks to nearby Swan Lake.
9. The ____ worm moves by extending the front part of the body and bringing the rear up to meet it, moving bit by bit.
12. ____ the World in Eighty Days; 1873 popular adventure novel by Jules Verne.
14. Time or speed ____.
15. ____ 7; James Bond, licensed to kill.
16. The Mo. House and Senate has declared Cuba, Mo. to be officially called the ____ 66 Mural City, referring to a
17. "Let your words teach ____ let your actions speak," — St. Anthony of Padua, d. in 1231.
18. Fashion magazine.
20. Identification number.
21. He carelessly ____ off toward the shoulder when he's talking with someone in the car.
23. "(The Lord) ____ the brokenhearted, binds up their wounds," (Psalms 147:3).
24. Suffix for bat or rat.
26. Middle of knickknack.
27. He got his mail delivered to a ____ Box.
28. Sedalia, Mo. is called the Queen City of the ____.
30. Dorothy's auntie.
31. ____ te absolve; confession words in Latin (i.e., I absolve you).
33. III + I = ____.
34. ____ I was saying...
35. There were five ____ in earth's history. The last was about 11,000 years ago when wooly mammoths went extinct (2 wds.).
36. Shortleaf, jack, eastern white, loblolly and scrub ____ all grow and reproduce in Mo.
39. This car company was founded in Turin, Italy.
40. Type of curves on a ski slope.
41. Nein in New York.

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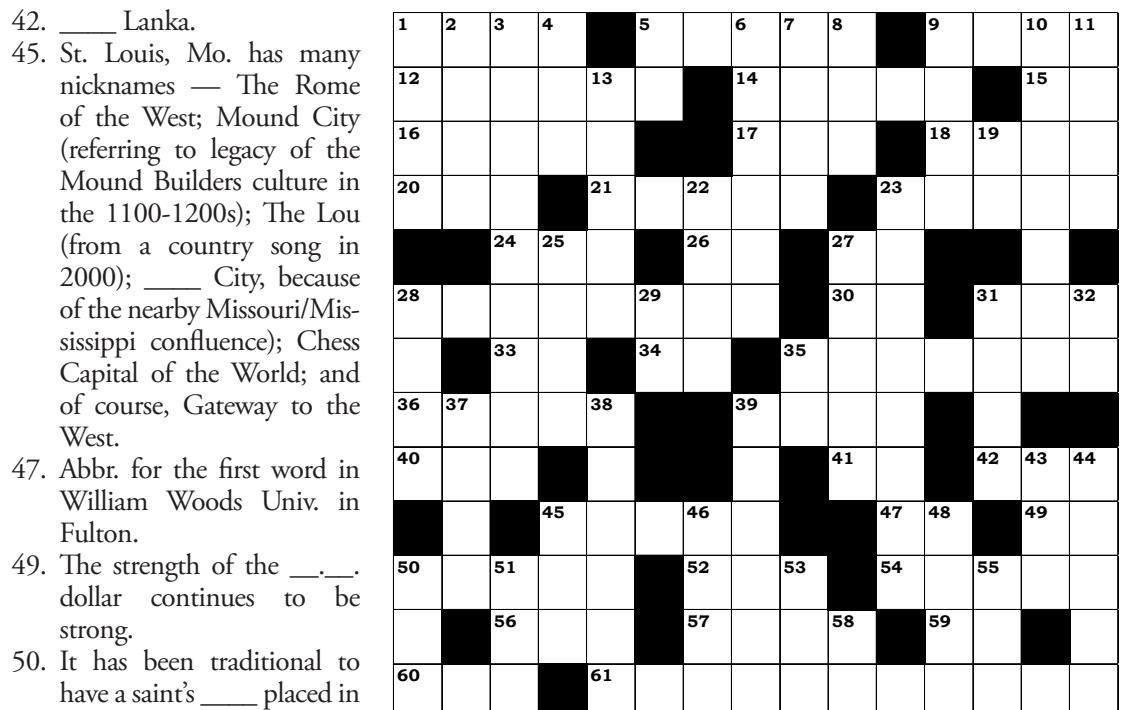
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42. ____ Lanka.
 45. St. Louis, Mo. has many nicknames — The Rome of the West; Mound City (referring to legacy of the Mound Builders culture in the 1100-1200s); The Lou (from a country song in 2000); ____ City, because of the nearby Missouri/Mississippi confluence); Chess Capital of the World; and of course, Gateway to the West.
 47. Abbr. for the first word in William Woods Univ. in Fulton.
 49. The strength of the ____ dollar continues to be strong.
 50. It has been traditional to have a saint's ____ placed in an altar stone in the altar at Mass.
 52. Head of a corporation.
 54. Dr. Martin Luther King won a ____ Peace Prize in 1964 for his commitment to racial justice through nonviolence.
 56. 16th Pres. informally.
 57. Q-V.
 59. Tea in Toledo.
 60. St. Anne to Mary.
 61. Hermann, Mo.'s official nickname (in German); a name literally meaning German Home.
- DOWN**
1. "Now there were six stone water ____ there for Jewish ceremonial washings..." (John 2:6).
 2. Cupid.
 3. Kansas City, Mo. has many nicknames — Cowtown; Bar-B-Q Capital of the World; Jazz Capital of the World; Heart of America; Paris of the Plains; but its official nickname is City of ____, with only Rome, Italy having more.
 13. "...but whoever drinks the water I shall give will ____ thirst," (John 4:14).
 19. Short for the second largest metro area in the country.
 22. He barely ____ out a living even with three jobs.
 23. Hannibal, Mo. is known as America's ____.
 25. Branson, Mo. brands itself as the ____ Show Capital of the World.
 27. Brunswick, Mo. bills itself the ____ Capital of Mo., due to a local abundance of those nut trees.
 28. Washington, Mo. is called the Corn Cob ____ Capital of the World because of the Mo. Meerschaum Co. there making between 600,000-800,000 every year.
 29. Hawkeye State (abbr.).
 31. Don't put all your ____ in one basket.
 32. Opening.
 35. Pope St. John Paul ____.
 37. ____ of Capri casino in Boonville.
 38. Chillicothe, Mo. is called the Home of ____ Bread, since it was invented there in July 1928.
 39. ____ Park in St. Louis opened in 1876 and covers 1,371 acres.
 43. He will ____ the day he did that!
 44. Religion that believes Muhammed was a descendant of Abraham's son Ishmael (Genesis 16:10).
 45. Acc. to the second account of creation, the Lord God built up a woman from a ____ of a man (Genesis 2:22).
 46. Light beige color.
 48. Like a ____ to a flame.
 50. A Dodge truck.
 51. He escaped from prison and is now on the ____.
 53. Playoff periods after a tied game.
 55. Opie's Aunt ____.
 58. The Univ. of Chicago (____) has 16,000+ students and one of the largest concentration of Laureate professors in the world.

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ANSWERS on page 19

ST. RAYMOND'S SOCIETY

From page 1

"From spiritual to financial to parenting skills, we look after the whole person," said Mr. Hentges.

The commitment continues long after the child is born.

"We fall short when we tell a woman in crisis to have a baby if we aren't willing to do anything to help them afterward," Mr. Hentges stated.

This approach empowers women to make real choices about their lives and the lives of their preborn children.

"People are eager for something positive at this front," said Mr. Hentges. "We're presenting something positive that nobody can refute."

National exposure

SRS received national notoriety this summer, just as it was preparing to launch into a new phase of discernment and growth.

SRS was named one of 11 finalists for The Catholic Extension Society of America's highest honor, the Lumen Christi ("Light of Christ") Award.

The award honors dedication to serving the poor in the most under-resourced dioceses in the United States, showcasing how the power of faith can transform lives and communities.

Being named a finalist garnered for SRS a \$10,000 prize and a write-up in the Fall 2019 issue of Catholic Extension's nationally-circulated magazine, *Extension* (www.lumenchristiaward.org/mike-steve-jefferson-city-finalists).

Around the same time, Mr. Hentges, a member of Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Columbia, announced that he would be stepping down from his administrative position at a Columbia-based company in order to become SRS's full-time development director.

He will meet one-on-one with potential contributors to help ensure the organization's long-term growth and viability.

"I love telling our story," said Mr. Hentges. "People get excited to hear about our mission. Just seeing their enthusiasm puts fuel in our tank."

Simultaneously, Mr. Smith,



Steve Smith and Mike Hentges, cofounders of the St. Raymond's Society, visit with a current client and an alumna of St. Raymond's House in Jefferson City.

— Photo by Jay Nies

a member of St. Peter parish in Jefferson City, plans to spend more time helping SRS clients learn career and financial skills. He will also advise organizations in other states that want to replicate the SRS model.

Both plan to help expand SRS into other communities in Missouri.

Mary Chen, the organization's longtime Jefferson City program director who helped to hone SRS's programs, services and focus, retired this summer.

Jane Dalton, formerly SRS's program director in Rolla, has been appointed to the newly created role of executive director, overseeing programs in all three St. Raymond Houses and in any others that open up in the state.

She was instrumental in developing SRS's life skills curriculum, known as "My Ridiculously Amazing Life."

A place to call home

Mr. Smith and Mr. Hentges have wives and children and hold down full-time jobs.

They have also made time to serve clients directly, raise money, and promote St. Raymond's Society in the various communities.

It all started when Mr. Hentges made a pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., for the annual March for Life.

On the way back, he asked God to show him ways to help pregnant women in difficult

circumstances choose life for their babies.

He shared what he was thinking with Mr. Smith, who agreed to help turn inspiration into reality.

"While people often focus on the babies, we realized that if we help the mothers, the babies will be cared for," said Mr. Smith.

They got off to a modest start, with the men gathering up what they could and lining up people to help women who are pregnant and in need.

They didn't have enough money to buy and staff a house, but they quickly came to realize that housing was one of the greatest obstacles to women choosing life.

"I figured it would be something we'd still be considering in 10 years," Mr. Hentges recently recalled.

But with help from generous donors and the Missouri Maternity Home state tax-credit program, SRS wound up with homes in Jefferson City, Columbia and Rolla.

"We now have three houses, and they're all paid for," said Mr. Smith. "And we're planning for more. And we're looking out of state."

Attainable goals

SRS serves people of all beliefs and backgrounds. It has helped more than 500 women who have chosen life.

It offers transitional housing not just for pregnant mothers

but also for any other children they have.

SRS provided housing to 21 mothers and their 26 children in 2018.

The average stay for moms in the transitional living program is eight months to a year.

Staff members help mothers find jobs, obtain college degrees and secure stable housing.

SRS's program focuses on goal-setting and attainment, as well as much needed accountability.

It emphasizes seven components of self-sufficiency: education, employment, parenting, personal wellness, budgeting, housing and transportation.

The objective is for the mothers — and the fathers when they agree to take part — to be ready to be parents and head of a household.

Help remains available to the women and their families.

"A woman never truly leaves SRS," said Mr. Smith. "We are there for them and alumni, and some have come back to now help other women."

The homes make up a large part of SRS's work, but a larger percentage of the women the society helps never come to live in one of the homes.

Last year, SRS provided outreach assistance to 137 non-residential mothers in their communities and their 211 children, who did not need housing but needed other assistance during chal-

lenging circumstances while pregnant.

Accountability

Each SRS staff member is being trained as a certified life coach.

"We walk our clients through each step of the process," said Mr. Smith. "We ask questions that keep you accountable. It always, 'What's the next step?'"

"Our staff have moved from being 'house moms' to being coaches for these women," he told Catholic Extension. "With these skills, they say to the women, 'It's your life and your goals. What do you want to do?' We walk this journey with them."

Another key is community.

"One of the beautiful things about the houses is that the women lean on each other in positive ways," said Mr. Smith. "They soon realize that they're in the same situation, and that there's help for them, and they're going to get through it together."

Even after they move on, the women and their children stay connected with each other and with the SRS staff.

The organization also recently developed a structured program for the dads to take responsibility and help raise their children.

"Whether they're going to be a spouse to the mother or not, the child needs a good father," said Mr. Smith.

"They are integral to the success if they can be a positive influence," Mr. Hentges added.

We're about life

SRS counts on financial support from local individuals and churches.

"We have the structure in place," said Mr. Smith. "We need financial support to keep it growing."

Mr. Smith and Mr. Hentges said they're grateful to their wives and families and employers for their patience and unconditional support.

They also talked about their parents and the other people who helped them learn to love

Fundraisers & Social Events

Dec. 15
Linn, K of C/St. Ann's Sodality breakfast buffet & bake sale, 7:30-11:30 am, St. George parish hall

Dec. 31
Mary's Home, Our Lady of the Snows NCYC New Year's Eve dance

Jan. 5
Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes Contemporary Group "Farewell to Christmas" concert, 3-4 pm, free-will offering to benefit One Call Institute

Jan. 18
Fulton, St. Peter K of C Ladies Auxiliary annual Candlelight Lasagna Dinner, 6-8 pm

Jan. 22
Sedalia, K of C Family Night Buffet, 4-7 pm

Jan. 26
Frankenstein, St. Mary School Archery Breakfast, 7-10:30 am

Sister recalls vaudeville days and her family as 'Nine Dancing Donahues'

Catholic News Service

Tucson, Ariz.

Sister Barbara Donahue, 90, was only 10 minutes into an interview about the vaudeville group made up of her and her siblings when she broke out in "The Donahue Song." The ditty was written by her mom for the group, which became its signature piece, emphasizing the importance of family. "We were just ordinary people trying to do extraordinary things," said Sr. Barbara, who is a member of the Sisters for Christian Community. She was talking to *Catholic Outlook*, Tucson's diocesan newspaper, as she looked back looking back on memorabilia from her childhood when she and her siblings were the "Nine Dancing Donahues." Sr. Barbara, who had her 90th birthday in September, lives at El Rancho Encanto assisted living center in Tucson. She was diagnosed recently with lung cancer. She's the last survivor of the troupe. Born Sept. 14, 1929, she was the youngest of five boys and four girls growing up in Detroit. Her dad, Emmett, was a bricklayer by trade, but supported his family with his job at the Plymouth auto factory. Her mom, Ella, was the musical genius. She graduated from St. Aloysius School and played the organ in church. "St. Aloysius was the root of all that happened," Sr. Barbara said.

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Meetings & Conferences

Dec. 12
Columbia, Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program Orientation, 5:30-7 pm, 916 Bernadette Drive; **Jefferson City**, St. Peter parish presentation on Our Lady of Guadalupe with Sr. Ana Luisa Prieto Valdez, 5:30-6:30 pm, Selinger Hospitality Centre

Dec. 26
Columbia, Cursillo School of Leaders, 7-8 pm, Our Lady of Lourdes parish

Jan. 2
Columbia, Area Ultreya for Cursillo, 7 pm, Our Lady of Lourdes parish's Flanagan Hall

Jan. 7
Moberly, Area Ultreya for Cursillo, 6:30 pm, St. Pius X parish undercroft

Jan. 9
Columbia, Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program Orientation, 5:30-7 pm, 916 Bernadette Drive

Jan. 10
Jefferson City, "Confirmed in the Spirit: New policy, best practices and practical resources for Confirmation," 9 am-3 pm, Alphonse J. Schwartze Memorial Catholic Center, to register visit diojeffcity.org/registration-workshops/

Jan. 11
Moberly, "Confirmed in the Spirit: New policy, best practices and practical resources for Confirmation," 9 am-3 pm, St. Pius X parish, to register visit diojeffcity.org/registration-workshops/

Jan. 18
Jefferson City, "Confirmed in the Spirit: New policy, best practices and practical resources for Confirmation," 9 am-3 pm, Alphonse J. Schwartze Memorial Catholic Center, to register visit diojeffcity.org/registration-workshops/

Jan. 20-24
St. Meinrad, IN, 11th Annual National Winter Chant Conference, St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, for info or to register, visit saintmeinrad.edu/continuing-formation/chant-institute/

Jan. 22-25
Washington DC, Annual March for Life pilgrimage, for info call Kris Hartman at (573) 635-9127 or email khartman@diojeffcity.org

Jan. 23
Columbia, Cursillo School of Leaders, 7-8 pm, Our Lady of Lourdes parish's Flanagan Hall

Liturgical

Dec. 17
Mary's Home, Seeking Christ for our Nation Mass, 6 pm, Our Lady of the Snows Church

Dec. 21
Mexico, Solemn High Mass in the Extraordinary Form, 11:15 am, St. Brendan Church

Jan. 7
Linn, Seeking Christ for our Nation Mass, 6:30 pm, St. George Church

Jan. 21
Mary's Home, Seeking Christ for our Nation Mass, 6 pm, Our Lady of the Snows Church

Chancery Closings

The chancery offices in the Alphonse J. Schwartze Memorial Catholic Center will be closed after noon on Friday, Dec. 20, for a staff gathering. The offices will be closed from noon on Tuesday, Dec. 24, through Thursday, Dec. 26, for Christmas; and from noon on Tuesday, Dec. 31, through Wednesday, Jan. 1, for New Years and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

Retreats & Spiritual Renewal

Jan. 3-5
Moberly, Engaged Encounter Weekend, St. Pius X Church, for info or to register, visit diojeffcity.org/marriage-preparation/ or call (573) 635-9127

Youth & Young Adults

Dec. 21
Mexico, Young adult Day of Recollection, for ages 18-35, by the Institute of Christ the King, 10 am-4 pm, St. Brendan Church

Jan 22-25
Washington DC, Annual March for Life pilgrimage, for info call Kris Hartman at (573) 635-9127 or email khartman@diojeffcity.org

Health & Wellness

Dec. 10
Loose Creek, Blood drive, 1:30-5:30 pm, Community Center

Dec. 14
Kirksville, Creighton Model FertilityCare introductory session, noon, Mary Immaculate parish center, to register call 660-665-2466 or email NEMOfertilitycare@gmail.com

DOERFLINGER

From page 9

booklet of Advent Gospel reflections. Other resources abound.

Remember that Jesus is not someone you have to squeeze into an otherwise secular holiday. Christmas means anything at all because it marks the beginning of the central event in the history of the universe.

When I'm in danger of forgetting that, I recall the poem "Christmas" by John Betjeman. Written decades ago and set in London, some of the poem seems dated and its references unfamiliar. But the last three stanzas are timeless. May you have a blessed Christmas.

"And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?

"And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissued fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,

"No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare—
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine."

Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.

Anniversaries

Brookfield, Immaculate Conception

Charles & Margaret Higinbothom, 50 years
Edward & Lori Kennedy, 31 years
Phillip & Lisa Sensenich, 14 years

California, Annunciation

Dick & Mary Teresa Kirchoff, 49 years

Fayette, St. Joseph

Bill & Mardell Wies, 43 years
Frank & Pam Flaspohler, 41 years

Jefferson City, Cathedral of St. Joseph

Rich & Kathy Anderson, 40 years

Kahoka, St. Michael

Dale & Dixie Small, 30 years

Kirksville, Mary Immaculate

Louis & Carol Berrey, 57 years
George & Diane Schulte, 48 years
Glenn & Vicki Wehner, 42 years
Steve & Kit Hadwinger, 34 years
Charles & Tina Zeman, 33 years
Jay & Vicki Benson, 26 years
Todd & Kristina Palumbo, 26 years
Brent & Susan Speak, 20 years

Marceline, St. Bonaventure

Shane & Kathy Moore, 41 years
Tom & Kerry Beaver, 28 years
Andy & Michelle North, 26 years
Gabe & Becky Edgar, 23 years
Casey & Rachel Dillon, 13 years
Aaron & Melissa Florine, 12 years

Martinsburg, St. Joseph

Mark & Linda Fennewald, 40 years

Milan, St. Mary

Felipe & Consuelo Bahena, 28 years
Efren & Teresa Carrillo, 27 years
Benjamin & Veronica Ochoa, 17 years

Moberly, St. Pius X

Moe & Shirley Heddinghaus, 60 years

Montgomery City, Immaculate Conception

Tom & Kay Benney, 39 years
James & Christine Futhey, 23 years

Palmyra, St. Joseph

Doug & Marie Baker, 40 years
Ed & Pam Hess, 38 years
James & Donna Wilson, 32 years
Randy & Denise Dodd, 25 years
Steven & Jennifer Jones, 13 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@diojeffcity.org; FAXed to (573) 635-2286 (please designate *The Catholic Missourian* as the recipient); or mailed to: *The Catholic Missourian*, P.O. Box 104900, Jefferson City, MO 65110-4900.

St. James, Immaculate Conception

Bob & Betty Mattingly, 63 years

St. Martins, St. Martin

Harry & Cecilia Hentges, 50 years

Sedalia, St. Vincent de Paul

Larry & Kathy Johnson, 64 years
Warren & Sharon Kearney, 60 years
Gerald & Joyce Wiltz, 59 years
Ralph & Betty Randall, 58 years
Merley & Judy Staus, 52 years
Charles & Pamela Thompson, 40 Years
Michael & Diana Moon, 35 years
James & Peggy Schwalje, 30 years

Vienna,

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Joe & Brenda Weidinger, 39 years

Korbey & Crystelle Canuto, 12 years

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels

Kenny & Nina Huber, 47 years
Lloyd & Jeannie Burk, 46 years
Mike & Kyra Brehm, 31 years

Marriages

California, Annunciation — Morgan Henley & J.T. Trachsel

Montgomery City, Immaculate Conception — Lindsay Robinson & Christopher Dryden

Russellville, St. Michael — Teresa Distler & Eugene Klingele

St. Patrick, Shrine of St. Patrick — Alexandra Gray & Logan Sedore

Birthdays

Vienna, Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary — Victor Renkemeyer, his 91st on Dec. 4

Departures

Father Rolando Montes, a priest of the Diocese of Camagüey, Cuba, returning to his home diocese after spending a semester at the University of Missouri while working on a degree in institutional communication from the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome.

SRS

From page 17

God, know their faith and understand that it must be lived out in service of others.

"It goes to core of our faith," said Mr. Hentges. "Our life is not about us. We're about life." They hope the story of how their "little yes" to God is making a difference and will inspire other people.

"Little things done consistently over time develop great results," said Mr. Smith. "Just help somebody!"

"There might be someone in your life who you can say yes to and change their life forever," said Mr. Hentges.

SRS's founders ask for prayers for guidance and wisdom as they discern and enter the organization's next phase of discernment and growth.

"We're right back where we were 10 years ago," said Mr. Smith. "We don't know where this is going, but we're trusting God to help us in that discovery."

They also requested prayers for SRS's past, present and future clients.

"Moms, babies and families — they're what we're all about," said Mr. Hentges.

To find out how to donate to or volunteer for the St. Raymond's Society, call (573) 893-2067 or visit www.srshelp.org.

Baptisms

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — Jacob Hays

Cuba, Holy Cross — Oliver Owen White

son of Shane & Esli White

Holts Summit, St. Andrew — Sutton

Jade Otto, daughter of Dustin &

Melissa Otto; Lailah Marie Schumer, daughter of Tyler & Morgan Schumer

Jefferson City, Cathedral of St. Joseph — Cooper Rowan, Joel Wempe

Jonesburg, St. Patrick — Michael Allen Sullivan

son of Allen & Amanda Sullivan

Kirksville, Mary Immaculate — Sofia Ramirez

daughter of Rafael Ramirez & Guadalupe Alvarez

Rich Fountain, Sacred Heart — Jay

Christopher Holtmeyer, son of Derek

& Kaitlyn Holtmeyer; Cleo Cynthia

Troesser, daughter of Peter & Katie

Troesser

St. Clement, St. Clement — Millee Hoepf

daughter of Matthew & Jill Hoepf

St. Robert, St. Robert Bellarmine — Mateo David Uribe

St. Thomas, St. Thomas the Apostle — Annabell Joann Stockman

daughter of Zachary & Alanna Stockman

Taos, St. Francis Xavier — Bridger

Michael Kaiser, Mavis Ryan

Ledbetter, Josette Sue Sandbothe

Elections

California, Annunciation — Vickie Schroeder

president; Sandy Deraps, vice president; Cindy Tuttle, treasurer; Margaret Bieri, secretary,

of the parish ladies sodality

Kahoka, St. Michael & St. Patrick, Shrine of St. Patrick — John Brennan

president; John Wheeler, vice

president; Paul Germann, secretary;

Gloria Allen, Julie Kirchner, Barbara

Neyens, Adam Rung, Bruce

Uhlmeyer, members of the Clark

County Pastoral Council

Deaths

Precious Blood Sister Rose Marie Mersinger

87 — sister of the late Father Arthur Mersinger, who was a priest of the Jefferson City diocese, and who taught at St. Joseph School in Martinsburg — on Nov. 17. A Funeral Mass was celebrated on Nov. 20 in the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood's St. Joseph Chapel in O'Fallon.

Bonnets Mill, St. Louis of France — William L. Haslag

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul — Kristi Widmer

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes — Judy Gerken, Ed Wheatley, Timothy Woodridge

Freeburg, Holy Family — Richard Schwartz

Hannibal, Holy Family — Martha Willett

Holts Summit, St. Andrew — Rose Mary Rehagen

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — Thomas J. Parris

Jefferson City, St. Peter — Angeline Dusheke, Alice Lammers, Joseph Rozier

Loose Creek, Immaculate Conception — Richard J. Ruettgers

Mary's Home, Our Lady of the Snows — Raymond Bax

Morrison, Assumption — Dorris Starke

Rich Fountain, Sacred Heart — Jamey Kleffner

St. Martins, St. Martin — Jayne Meller-Bennett, John Ousley

Taos, St. Francis Xavier — Donald J. Bernskoetter

Tipton, St. Andrew — Rusty Williams

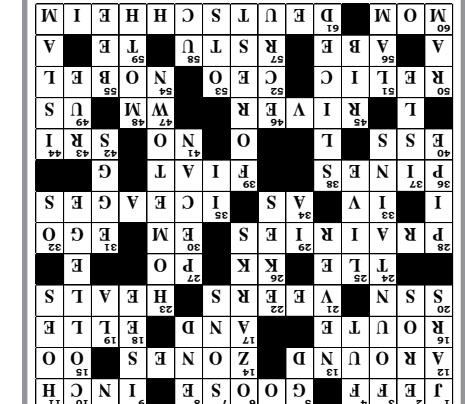
Wardsville, St. Stanislaus — Herman Kempker

Honors

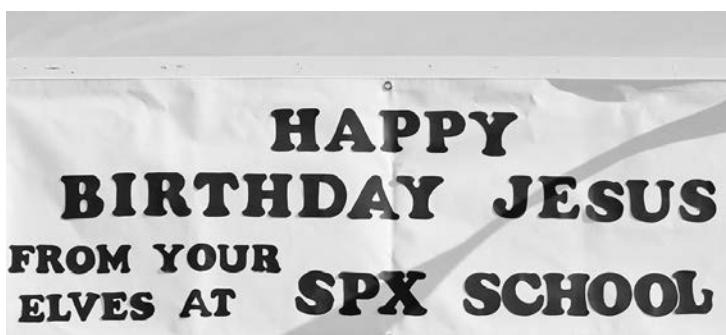
St. Clement, St. Clement School

2019 Best of Bowling Green Award in the Elementary School Category

Crossword puzzle answers



"Happy birthday, Jesus!"



"Little elves," who are students aboard St. Pius X School's float, host a birthday party for Jesus during the Moberly Area Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade on Nov. 28.

— Photos by Dot Shannon



Desert angels



Students at Fr. McCartan Memorial School in Marceline rehearse for their Western-themed Christmas play, "Christmas at Bethlehem Gulch," which they will present the afternoon of Dec. 15.

Runners at State



Members of Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School's girls' varsity cross-country team display their second-place trophy at the state meet on Nov. 9.

Giving back



Seventh- and eighth-graders from Immaculate Conception School in Macon do volunteer work at the local food pantry on Nov. 19. "They are hard workers and love giving back to their community," their teachers stated.

— Photo from I.C. School's Facebook page

Gabriel delivers a message to Mary

By Jennifer Ficcia

Catholic News Service

One day, God sent His angel, Gabriel, on a very important mission.

God asked Gabriel to deliver a message to a young woman, Mary, who lived in the town of Nazareth in Galilee.

Mary was a virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, whose family was related to King David. "Betrothed" means that Mary and Joseph were married, but they were not yet living together as a married couple.

Gabriel came to Mary's home. When he saw her, he called out to her.

"Hail, full of grace!" Gabriel said. "The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled by his greeting and wondered



what it meant. Gabriel wanted to put her mind at ease.

"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God," he assured her.

Gabriel went on to explain

that God had chosen Mary to be the mother of the Messiah.

"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall name Him Jesus," the angel told Mary. "He

will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give Him the throne of David his father, and He will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

As Mary was taking in all that the angel said, she asked how what he had told her would take place.

Gabriel said that the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary and she would be overshadowed by God's power.

"Therefore the Child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God," he said.

After Gabriel had finished delivering his message about the Messiah, he had some more news to share with Mary.

Mary had a cousin named Elizabeth, who was married

to the priest Zechariah. Elizabeth and Zechariah were old, and Elizabeth was never able to have children.

"And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God," Gabriel said.

Mary was overcome with emotion.

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord," Mary told Gabriel. "May it be done to me according to your word."

Read more about it...

Luke 1

1. Who was to deliver a message to Mary?
2. What was the message about?

Bible Accent

When Mary received news from the angel Gabriel that she was to give birth to the Messiah, she also learned that her childless cousin, Elizabeth, was going to have a baby as well.

Several months before visiting Mary, Gabriel had visited Zechariah, Elizabeth's husband, to tell him that he and his wife would have a child, who would be named John.

After Mary heard the news of her cousin's pregnancy, she very quickly made the trip to the town in Judah in which

Zechariah and Elizabeth lived. She wound up visiting with them for three months.

When Mary arrived at their house, she greeted Elizabeth.

Upon hearing Mary's voice, the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy.

Then Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

"Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb," she said to Mary in a loud voice. "And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my

Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

Essay

Write about a time when you were told something that was unexpected, and describe how you handled it.

Puzzle

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



fo rold ma eth dandhaim i delhob het

Quote:

_____, _____.



Answers: of Lord am the handmaid I
beheld the; Behold, I am the hand-
maid of the Lord.

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Christmas movie tells story of orphans helped by guardian angels

By Denis Grasska
Catholic News Service

San Diego

When it debuted in late 2018, "Buttons: A Christmas Tale" boasted an impressive number of famous names and familiar faces, and it was shown in select theaters only Dec. 8, 2018.

Fortunately for the many who missed their one chance to see it last year, the film is being released on DVD Dec. 3, just in time for the holidays. It was released on digital platforms Nov. 19.

The musical film tells the interconnected stories of two orphans who overcome heartbreak and adversity at Christmas time, thanks to the watchful care and timely help of a pair of guardian angels, played



Dick Van Dyke and Angela Lansbury star as guardian angels in "Buttons: A Christmas Tale." The 2018 musical film is being released on DVD Dec. 3, 2019, just in time for the holidays.

— CNS photo/Paramount Home Entertainment

by Hollywood legends Dick Van Dyke and Angela Lansbury.

The star-studded film's cast also includes Jane Sey-

mour ("Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman"), Roma Downey ("Touched by an Angel"), Ioan Gruffudd ("The Fantastic Four" movies), Robert Picardo ("Star Trek: Voyager"), John de Lancie (Q from "Star Trek: The Next Generation"), Charles Shaughnessy ("The Nanny"), and Abigail Spencer (then the star of NBC's time-travel drama "Timeless").

If that weren't enough, Academy Award-winners Robert Redford and Kate Winslet are the film's narrators.

American composer Tim Janis, who co-wrote, composed the music for and made his directorial debut with "Buttons," said the film is a reminder "that you're not alone and that you should have hope."

During a Nov. 25 telephone interview with *The Southern Cross*, San Diego's diocesan newspaper, Janis said that in



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MEDIA

Movie Ratings



Adults and Adolescents

Arctic Dogs (PG)
A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood (PG)
The Divine Plan (not rated)
Frozen II (PG)
Love and Mercy: Faustina (not rated)
Playing With Fire (PG)



Adults

Charlie's Angels (PG-13)
The Current War: Director's Cut (PG-13)
Ford v Ferrari (PG-13)
The Good Liar (R)
Knives Out (PG-13)
Lucy in the Sky (R)
Midway (PG-13)
Motherless Brooklyn (R)
Terminator: Dark Fate (R)



Limited Adult Audience

By the Grace of God (not rated)
Doctor Sleep (R)
21 Bridges (R)



Queen & Slim (R)

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

addition to the celestial beings depicted onscreen, he "cannot say that there weren't angels helping and supporting" his efforts to make the film and to bring it to audiences.

It was his first film and, not only was it blessed with a cast that many veteran filmmakers would envy, but after being shown in theaters for one night only through Fathom Events, it secured a DVD release through Paramount Home Entertainment.

All of this, he said, is "like a miracle in itself."

An admitted fan of the many classic Christmas films that have become perennial favorites, Janis said those movies were a source of inspiration for him.

He acknowledged that his own contribution to the genre bears some similarity to Frank Capra's "It's a Wonderful Life," another Christmas film concerned with prayer, heavenly help and the triumph of hope over despair.

In Janis' film, "Buttons" in the title is the nickname of one of the orphans helped by the guardian angels. Forced to

work in a mill but too small to work the machines, the girl instead sews on buttons.

What makes Van Dyke and Lansbury so well-suited for the role of guardian angels?

For Janis, it has something to do with the fact that the two nonagenarian actors are "so much a part of our youth" thanks to their lengthy filmographies. And, in such beloved films as "Mary Poppins" (starring Van Dyke) and "Bedknobs and Broomsticks" (with Lansbury), he said, they project "such a warm, caring presence."

"You just almost instinctively want to think of them as your guardian angels, if they could be," he said.

As one who has enjoyed watching Van Dyke sing and dance on film over the years, Janis said he made sure to give the veteran performer a few more opportunities to demonstrate those talents in "Buttons."

The film's one-day theatrical run last year represented such "a small window of time,"

See ANGELS, page 23

ANGELS

From page 22

Janis said, that even some of his own family members were concerned about whether they would be able to see it in theaters.

Of the film's debut on digital platforms and DVD, he said he considers this "the movie's real release."

"I'm glad that people now can have it in their home, and they can purchase it and watch it," he said. "I think it'll be able to reach more people, which I really want it to do."

Among its potential viewers, he hopes, will be those in particular need of having their spirits lifted and hearts touched at Christmas.

Grasska is assistant editor of The Southern Cross, newspaper of the Diocese of San Diego.

VETERANS

From page 10

Dan C. Coppin and St. Jude assemblies of Jefferson City and Mary's Home, respectively.

At the end of Mass, parishioner Jack Dayton led the congregation in a prayer for veterans who had died, and their families.

Joe McGrail offered a reflection on some of the experiences all veterans share.

The choir led the singing of the National Anthem.

Members of the Samuel F. Gearhart Detachment of the Marine Corps League fired a three-volley rifle salute in the street outside the church,

followed by "Taps" played by bugler James Rice, a student at Helias Catholic High School, echoing down the choir loft stairwell.

Three sections of third-graders from St. Peter Interparish School attended the Mass and prayer service.

After Mass, third-grader Allison Amick talked about the veterans in her family tree, including great-grandfathers who served in the Navy in World War II.

"It's nice to celebrate with our veterans," said Allison. "They might feel thankful for that."



Daily Readings

Sunday, Dec 15

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Is. 35:1-6a, 10
Ps. 146:6-10
Jas. 5:7-10
Mt. 11:2-11

Wednesday, Dec 18

Jer. 23:5-8
Mt. 1:18-25

Thursday, Dec 19

Jgs. 13:2-7, 24-25a
Lk. 1:5-25

Friday, Dec 20

Is. 7:10-14
Lk. 1:26-38

Tuesday, Dec 17

Gn. 49:2, 8-10
Mt. 1:1-17

Saturday, Dec 21

St. Peter Canisius, priest, doctor of the Church
Sg. 2:8-14 or Zep. 3:14-18a
Lk. 1:39-45

The Holy Father's prayer intentions for December:

That every country take the measures necessary to prioritize the future of the very young, especially those who are suffering.

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RAY OF HOPE

From page 4

A place to land

Ray of Hope Pregnancy Ministries opened its main location in Macon on Aug. 15, 2010 — the day Catholics around the world celebrate Mary saying "yes" to being Jesus's mother.

The Shelbina location opened four years later in a building Mr. and Mrs. Durbin own on the same block as St. Mary Church.

Mrs. Durbin has watched in wonder as people set aside their theological and even political differences in order to help families, mothers and babies in need.

The Ray of Hope board of directors has representatives from every local congregation.

"There are no boundaries when it comes to what we are doing with Ray of Hope," she said. "It pulls on my heart strings to see us all unified in Christ for life, a cause that should have no divisions."

It has also united people in giving.

The Macon and Shelby County Knights of Columbus, Shelby County Right to Life

and many other faith-based organizations have been tremendously supportive throughout Ray of Hope's existence.

Children and adults have foregone presents at birthday parties, instead asking for support for Ray of Hope.

High school students sponsor fundraisers. The local Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter has welcomed Mrs. Durbin to talk about Ray of Hope's mission.

"I tell them how necessary it is to have pregnancy resource centers in every community," she said.

Whenever she gives a presentation, she likens pregnancy resource centers to light towers along an airport runway.

"When someone is experiencing difficulties on their journey and needs to make a safe landing, we are all prepared and waiting," she said.

Smoke signals

An off-duty 911 dispatcher contacted Mrs. Durbin to tell her about the fire.

Father Simeon Etonu, current pastor of the Shelbina

and Clarence parishes, met her when she arrived at the scene.

"It was devastating," she recalled. "I teared up for a moment. But right away, two different firefighters asked if we could give them information about our ministry."

"I realized then that God was going to use this to let people who need us know we're here," she said.

Throughout the day, pastors from nearby congregations offered free office and storage space and whatever help they could give.

"It's been amazing," said Mrs. Fuller. "And maybe through all of this, more people will find out that we exist and what our mission is."

Looking for the best

Mrs. Fuller said it's a privilege to be part of a ministry and a community that shines such a bright light of hope in times of such difficulty.

"We are amazed by the outpouring of love, prayers and support from our community," she stated. "Many volunteers from First Baptist and from Ray of

Hope worked to get the space ready in a short period of time."

She asked for prayers for the center's clients as they weather the transition.

She also suggested praying for the Ray of Hope staff and board as it seeks a permanent home.

"We're not just looking for a good location, we're looking for the best," she said. "We want it to be a space where we can reach the most clients, where we can save lives and help families."

"Beauty from Ashes"

Mrs. Fuller said Ray of Hope is much more than a building.

"It is a mission and a com-

munity of people who are battling on the front lines to stand for the sanctity of human life," she stated. "During difficult times, there is no better people to be surrounded by."

All money contributed to Ray of Hope's Beauty from Ashes campaign will go toward the next steps of opening up a permanent location in Shelby County.

Donations can be sent to Ray of Hope PCM, 309 N. Missouri St., Suite B, Macon, MO 63552. Checks should have "Beauty from Ashes" written in the memo section.

Online donations can be made at:

www.rayofhopepregnancycenter.com

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"Cela est juste et bon"



Father Boniface Kasiita Nzabonimpa — a priest of the Diocese of Kampala, Uganda, who is serving as pastor of St. Boniface parish in Brunswick, St. Raphael parish in Indian Grove and the St. Joseph mission at Hurricane Branch — gathers with congregants after offering the first monthly Mass in French in Mary Immaculate Church in Kirksville on Dec. 8. About 30 people attended. Fr. Nzabonimpa speaks French fluently. More than 1,000 people who are immigrants from parts of Africa where French is commonly spoken have settled in the Kirksville area. About 75 percent of them are Catholic. "The people of Mary Immaculate parish in Kirksville have opened its doors and are welcoming these great people," stated Deacon Enrique Castro, director of intercultural and marriage ministries for the diocese.

Deacon Castro assisted the priest at the Mass. For the time being, Mass will be offered in French in Mary Immaculate Church, 716 E. Washington St., beginning Feb. 16. The ministry is being supported through Intercultural Ministries of the diocese as an effort of outreach and welcome. (The headline, from the Preface in the French translation of the Mass, means "This is right and good.")

— Photo by
Deacon Enrique Castro

Planning for death is as natural for the Christian as planning for life. Having a will is good stewardship and planning of your assets. Remember to always take care of your family, and consider taking care of your parish family long after you are gone.

Have you already remembered your parish or school in your estate plans? Please let us know!


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