MORE THAN 500 PEOPLE EXPRESS THEIR DESIRE TO JOIN CHURCH AT EASTER VIGIL

Pages 3, 10-12
Diocese addresses concerns over coronavirus

In the midst of the influenza season and with growing concerns regarding the potential spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) virus in the United States, Bishop Robert Brennan is encouraging all members of the Diocese of Columbus to take reasonable precautions and demonstrate good judgment in safeguarding their own health and the health of fellow parishioners, those in schools, diocesan facilities, outreach locations and wherever there is interaction with the general public.

Diocesan offices are working with various health officials to stay abreast of the coronavirus and any public health issues. At present, the message from public health agencies is to be cautious and aware. If notified by state or county health authorities that further precautions are necessary, that information will be shared with the faithful and diocesan offices will work with all concerned in order to take appropriate concerns.

In the meantime, please consider the following:

- As always, if you or a member of your family are ill, or even experiencing symptoms of illness, you are not obliged to attend Mass. In a spirit of prudence and charitable concern for fellow parishioners, please remain home and attend to your own health. If you wish to stay connected in prayer, St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820 in central Ohio, FM 88.3 in southern Ohio and www.sigrabi radio.com on the web) broadcast Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral (AM) and Portsmouth St. Mary’s Church on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Sunday Masses are also viewable on both WWHO-TV in Columbus and WHIZ-TV in Zanesville, in addition to other cable stations.
- In that same spirit, exercise good judgment and concern for others regarding coughing, sneezing, keeping surfaces clean and the shaking of hands.
- No one should feel obliged to shake hands. While it is the customary form at the greeting of peace, it is not the only form. It is sufficient to simply turn and offer a sincere expression such as “peace be with you,” for example.
- All ministers of Holy Communion

Zanesville St. Thomas Aquinas Church closed during structural evaluation

The Zanesville St. Thomas Aquinas Church building has been declared unsafe by officials of the Mid-East Ohio Building Department, which inspects all building activity regulated by the state building code in Muskingum County.

Masses and other events that take place in the church will be relocated to the parish activity center until a decision is made on the building's future. Weekday Masses will be in the parish chapel.

The code enforcement agency on Wednesday, Feb. 26 issued a condemnation order for the building until repairs have been made, said Jason Baughman, chief building official with the department. The decision to do so was made after an inspection that day by structural engineers of the trusses and posts in the church attic that day by structural engineers of the diocese of Columbus facilities engineering team to provide a full assessment of the structure. Parishioners will be informed of further developments as information becomes available.

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, at 144 N. 5th St. in downtown Zanesville, was dedicated in 1844. Its cornerstone was laid in 1842. In that same year, Zanesville’s other Catholic parish, St. Nicholas Church, was founded. The two churches are located within a half-mile of each other.

Dominican friars served St. Thomas Aquinas, originally known as St. John Church, for 194 years – from 1823, when Father Stephen Montgomery, OP, became Zanesville’s first resident priest, until 2017, when the Dominican Province of St. Joseph decided to withdraw the friars from Zanesville because the province has refocused its ministries on larger communities of friars.

Father Jan Sullivan has been the parish’s pastor since the friars’ departure.

Diocese adds name to list of credibly accused clergy

The name of Father Francis Masserella, a member of the Glenmary Home Missioners, has been added to the Diocese of Columbus’ list of priests credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor.

This action and announcement are made in accordance with the Catholic Church’s Charter and Norms for the Protection of Children and Young People and the diocese’s published Policies for Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Response to Allegations Thereof.

Father Masserella, who died in May 2014 at age 98, has been added to Section V of the list, for “extern or religious clergy who served in the diocese of Columbus that were credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors elsewhere (alleged conduct occurred outside the Diocese of Columbus).”

During a review of clergy lists of religious orders, diocesan staff members found Father Masserella’s name listed on the Glenmary website, with service in the Diocese of Columbus.

A review of Official Catholic Directory records indicates that he served at Pond Creek Holy Family and Otway Our Lady of Lourdes parishes in 1944 and 1945. Those parishes were part of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

See CLERGY, Page 8

CORRECTION

The March 1 Catholic Times listed incorrect times for Eucharistic Adoration at Sugar Grove St. Joseph Church. The correct times are from the end of the noon Mass to 1:30 p.m.

Thursdays and from 8 p.m. Saturday to 8 a.m. Sunday.

The date for the fish fry at Columbus St. Andrew Church was incorrectly listed as Friday, March 20. The correct date is Friday, March 6 from 4 to 7 p.m.

See VIRUS, Page 8
Rite of Election participants inspire others, bishop says

By Tim Puet
Catholic Times Reporter

Bishop Robert Brennan told people who are planning to receive the Sacraments of Initiation next month that even before joining the Church, their example is inspiring Catholics throughout the Diocese of Columbus.

The bishop presided at diocesan Rite of Election ceremonies on Saturday, Feb. 29 at Grove City Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church and on Sunday, March 1 at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church. For the first time in the diocese, both ceremonies were bilingual, with Scripture readings, the bishop’s homily, the prayers of the faithful and music alternating between English and Spanish.

The diocesan Office for Divine Worship said 521 people from throughout the diocese declared at the ceremonies that they intended either to become Catholics or to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. A total of 378 are candidates, who already have been baptized in another Christian denomination but who have not been confirmed or received the Eucharist, while 143 are catechumens, who neither have been baptized nor received the other two sacraments (Holy Communion and Confirmation).

The catechumens and candidates are taking part in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), a yearlong program of weekly classes explaining Catholic beliefs and practices.

“The is something about this Church that really makes an impact in the world, that can lead others into a deeper meaning of life,” Bishop Brennan said in his homily at the rite. “You catechumens and candidates do something profound to all of us. We who already are Catholics get used to this gift of faith we have. Seeing your response, your numbers, your enthusiasm, your deep faith lifts up the rest of us. It reminds me and all of us of the great gifts of faith, hope and love in the sacraments. You spark something that says to us the encounter with Jesus is not an ordinary encounter.”

Bishop Brennan noted that he attended a fish fry for the first time on Friday, Feb. 28 at Danville St. Luke Church. “It’s just not a big deal on the East Coast,” where he lived all his life until becoming bishop of Columbus last year, he said. “But everybody in central Ohio knows that fish fries in Lent are a big deal. Leave it to Catholics to turn a sacrifice (abstaining from meat) into a party.”

Lent are a big deal. Leave it to Catholics to turn a sacrifice (abstaining from meat) into a party.

Finding Church via work

At least two of this year’s Rite of Election participants — Ken Snow and Britanie Powers — will be joining the Church after coming in daily contact with Catholics through work connections related to the diocese.

Snow, of the New Albany Church of the Resurrection, is a photographer whose work appears in the diocesan Rite of Initiation on Feb. 29 in Grove City. Her godparents are standing beside her. CT photo by Ken Snow

Megan Henderson, 10, a Hilliard resident who will attend Columbus St. Patrick Church, signs the Book of the Elect at the diocesan Rite of Initiation on Feb. 29 in Grove City. Her godparents are standing beside her. CT photo by Ken Snow

The Catholic Times nearly every week and who is a former employee of the diocesan Communications Office. Some of his photos accompany this story. Powers is a teacher at Coshocton Sacred Heart School.

Snow’s family went to Presbyterian churches in Texas, where he was born, and in central Ohio, where the family moved when he was 4 years old. He believes he was baptized at some point, but no baptismal records could be found for him, though there are records for his two younger brothers.

He has been involved with the Diocese of Columbus for more than three decades, but many diocesan employees were unaware until now that he is not a Catholic. “It was a very pleasant surprise to see Ken one Sunday at Mass and find out from him that he was joining the Church,” said Resurrection parishioner Julie Greer, executive assistant at the diocesan Chancery.

“He worked at the Chancery and has been a part of the diocese for so long that I just assumed he was Catholic,” she said. Snow said Greer told him she thought he might be the only non-Catholic who ever worked in the Chancery, but that’s not the case.

“I’ve been around the Catholic Church for 35 years,” he said. “When I was helping with the diocese’s televised Sunday Mass, people kidded me, saying I was more Catholic than most Catholics they knew.”

In 1985, Snow became diocesan coordinator of the Mass, which the diocese had been presenting on WCMH-TV, Channel 4, since the mid-1960s. The Masses at that time were taped during the week at the Channel 4 studios. Snow and station employees shared production duties, with Snow scheduling priests, readers and musicians from throughout the diocese to take part in the program. Production of the Mass moved in the early 1990s to St. Turibius Chapel of the Pontifical College Josephinum, with Father Thomas Kessler as director.

“Father Kessler said to me once that Mass is not a ‘show,’ and I always tried to treat it reverently, but for many years, I approached it with the production mindset.”

St. Elizabeth Parish Lenten Mission “UNDERSTANDING GOD’S MERCY”

Presented by Fr. Thomas Blau, OP
Confessions each evening from 6-7 pm
Presentation each evening from 7-8:30 pm

Nightly themes:
Understanding God’s mercy.
How do we receive God’s mercy?
How do we live in God’s mercy?
Examination of Conscience

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Call 614-891-0150 for any questions.
No cost to attend
Confirmation class provides hope in the midst of tears

Finding Faith in Everyday Life
Sarah Reinhard

Sarah Reinhard is a Catholic wife, mother and writer in central Ohio. She is online at SnoringScholar.com.

In those faces and in the questions they’ll ask if we listen, I find the gift of the next generation. They remind me that I don’t know it all, but the answers are findable.

The answers, however, are not always in words.

As we drove to the funeral of an 18-year-old that night in February, I asked my daughter if she wanted to pray a Divine Mercy Chaplet.

I didn’t ask because I’m holy. I asked because I didn’t know what else to say. I knew it was going to be hard. And I knew that she needed to be there. And above all, I knew she needed the reminder of mercy. She needed the foundation of her faith to hold the rocking sobs that later would shake her. When you are facing grief that’s bigger than you are, it’s easy to be overcome. It’s easy to want to give up. It’s easy to fall and stay down.

There is an ancient saying: Stat crux, dum volvi tur orbit. It translates, “When all else in the world is shaken and passes, the Cross stands firm.”

In his book Overcoming Spiritual Discourage ment, Father Timothy Gallagher references this and writes, “The Cross of Christ is the solid ground on which we can stand in time of suffering.”

Father Gallagher continues with this advice: “Place a crucifix where you can see it. Frequently, and especially in times of suffering, fix your gaze on the crucifix. There you will see every kind of bodily pain—head, face, back, feet—and every kind of emotional pain—abandonment, betrayal, unjust condemnation, ingratitude. Where you are, he has been. He understands. He shares your pain with you.”

He shares your pain with you. And that truly is what we seek. When we gathered to celebrate the young life, gone too soon and in such a tragic way, we were together. And when the friends found themselves in a basement watching a game together, grieving and sharing presence, I reflected on the quote the pastor shared in his opening reflection about presence.

In a time of plenty, when few of us will ever be truly hungry, so many are starving for attention.

Think of how often the works of mercy demand your time: visiting, instructing, counseling, admonishing, bearing, forgiving, comforting, praying.

How often in a day—the few hours a day I’m around my children—do I hear, “Hey, Mom, look!”? And how often do I actually stop to look, to be with them?

The busy isn’t going anywhere. Neither is Jesus.

Program will look at Evangelium Vitae 25 years later

A panel of speakers will discuss the effects of Pope St. John Paul II’s encyclical Evangelium Vitae in a program at Gahanna St. Matthew Church on the Solemnity of the Assumption, Wednesday, March 25, the 25th anniversary of the date when the document was issued. The theme of the program, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. will be “The Fruits of the Gospel of Life.”

Topics will include: “Walking with Mothers,” with Monica Flynn of Mommies Matter; “Post-Abortion Reconciliation and Healing,” with Becky D’Alesio of Catholic Social Services; “Project Rachel: Bioethics and End-of-Life Issues,” with Father Bob Penhallurick, chaplain of the central Ohio chapter of the Catholic Medical Association; and “The Death Penalty,” with Jim Tobin of the Catholic Conference of Ohio. The evening also will include a video message from Bishop Robert Brennan.

The teachings of Evangelium Vitae on the value and inviolability of every human life have inspired Catholics around the world for the past 25 years. The encyclical has produced many fruits in the work of building a culture of life and continues to address the challenges of our day.

The program is being co-sponsored by St. Matthew Church and the diocesan Office for Social Concerns. For more details, call (614) 241-2540 or send an email message to socmail-box@columbuscatholic.org.

Council of Catholic Women to sponsor workshop, retreat

The Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is sponsoring an estate planning workshop in March and a silent retreat in May.

The workshop will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 21 at Grove City Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 3730 Broadway. The cost is $30, including lunch and materials. Registration forms are due by Friday, March 13 and are available on the website of the Diocese of Columbus website, or you can call the DCCW office at (614) 228-8601.

The retreat will be from Friday to Sunday, May 1 to 3 at St. Therese’s Retreat Center, 5277 E. Broad St., Columbus. The cost is $150, which includes two nights’ lodging, meals and materials.

Bereavement ministry to meet at Immaculate Conception

The next session of the Seasons of Hope bereavement ministry sponsored by the North High Deanery will begin Sunday, March 15 in Marian Hall of Columbus Immaculate Conception Church, 414 E. North Broad way.

The deanery offers the six-week ministry four times a year for anyone affected by the loss of a loved one. The program is a Catholic, Christ-centered support group that includes Scripture, prayer, reflection, and sharing. Its spring session will meet each Sunday
Praying for coronavirus victims and for an end to this deadly scourge

EVERYDAY CATHOLIC
Rick Jeric

The world is still struggling with the coronavirus. No one wants to deal with a virus and the resulting illnesses like this one. We pray for all those who have lost their lives around the world and for those who are currently very sick. We hope this is under control and eradicated soon. For all the wonderful advances we have in medicine, nature continues to throw things at us that baffle and confound. Thankfully, we have confidence in our medical researchers and physicians. Without them, the misery and deaths would be so much worse.

The word “corona” has many different meanings. Under certain sky conditions and depending on the time of day, have you ever noticed the fiery glow around the sun? Sometimes there is more color, and sometimes it just looks amazingly brilliant and flashy. And every so often, when there is a solar eclipse, as the shadow seems to completely block the sun, you still can see the glow and rays extending outward in a circle. It is quite a sight. Not nearly the same, but similar, is a lunar eclipse when the edge of the moon shines its reflective light. No fiery glow, but still something very different and intriguing. Those fiery glows are called coronas. And we have a full moon this Monday. Also, remember to set your clocks ahead one hour as Daylight Savings Time begins.

Various uses of “corona” make sense. The word means “crown.” The logo of the Corona Cerveza company that produces a popular beer (cerveza is the Spanish word for beer) has a crown on it. The coronavirus was named for the crown-like spikes on its surface when magnified. And the glowing of the gaseous material around the sun can resemble a crown. Even Our Lady of Fatima used the sun in a miraculous way as a sign, identifying herself as Our Blessed Mother and Our Lady of the Rosary. And we all know that kings and queens throughout history have worn crowns as a sign of their royalty and power. We often see Jesus Christ with a crown as the king of the universe.

We are a little more than one week into our Lenten journey. The goals we have committed to, the pleasures we have given up (cerveza), and the positive actions we are doing can be crowning achievements. Whatever our personal challenges are, we strive to come through these 40 days with a “crown” on our head. Yes, we can celebrate God’s goodness, mercy and forgiveness by sharing that joy with everyone. Our family, friends, co-workers, and even strangers should see that corona glow on our faces, hear it in our words, and feel it from our hearts. Let us keep praying in earnest, fasting as much as possible, and giving alms as meaningful donations. Wear the glowing crown of Jesus Christ with humility and great love.

Doing the dirty work for God and His people in prison

By Michele Williams

In 2010, I transferred from the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW) in Marysville to the Franklin Medical Center (FMC) in southwest Columbus to be a cadre worker (an inmate who is part of the prison staff). I had prayed for guidance, needed a change and wanted to be closer to my family. I believe God approved because He made it happen, and what a great move it was.

FMC is the only hospital in Ohio’s prison system and houses about 250 inmates. From its tiny yard, I could look beyond the double fences and razor wire to see Columbus’ skyline. It shone like the Emerald City in the distance. It became a beacon toward the distance. It became a beacon toward the light of hope and our future. I walked its miniature track.

In Luke 16:10, Jesus says, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can be trusted with much.” I worked hard from my first day in maintenance to show I was trustworthy and, over time, my responsibilities grew. I became the only female boiler operator and licensed HVAC technician in FMC history. I helped build a hot water boiler and install two industrial chillers and condensers for the air conditioning system. Let me tell you, I was equal parts excited and terrified the first time I lit an acetylene torch to braise pipes (it’s like welding on a smaller scale). All I could do was pray “Lord, don’t let me blow up anything!” He guided my shaking hands around the first pipe, then, during the next six months, around nearly 300 more.

Eventually, I was the go-to girl. I could leave my officer escort at the powerhouse door and reset the entire system by myself after hours or when the power went out. I felt very blessed and lucky to have earned that reputation.

This was not all about me, though. The patients and permanent residents, the old men and pregnant women defined my purpose for this bizarre line of work I’d embraced. It is summed up easily in Matthew 25:40: “Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” I made it my mission to ensure a quality-of-life standard. As far as I was able, I would not allow anyone to suffer any more than they already were. I knew every person in that hospital had committed a crime, and I didn’t care. I’d committed one, too, so who was I to judge? I wanted to help them and perhaps alone for my sins by doing something good.

Air quality and room temperatures became my priority, and both took considerable effort to regulate. If a patient’s room was uncomfortable, I’d fix it. Sometimes that meant climbing up into the ceiling to adjust fan blower speeds, or going down to the boiler room to fire up the boiler or chiller, or heading out on the roof to access the air handlers.

There were days when I’d return to my room looking like a chimney sweep as a result of army-crawling through the air ducts to clean them. By the way, they’re just like the movies, only yuckier and more claustrophobic. It was worth the effort for the patients’ well-being and comfort. I could hear God saying “Well done, good and faithful servant. Get some rest and we’ll do it again tomorrow.” And we did.

I hated to leave FMC, but in 2017, my parole was denied and I was transferred back to ORW. I didn’t understand, but I knew God was still with me. There are no more females at FMC today, except for a few patients, because of a change in policy.

I hope whoever took my place as HVAC tech cares as much as I did. I still pray for those old guys waiting to meet St. Peter and the patients waiting for healing. Perhaps this Lent you can offer up a prayer, too, and know you did so for the least of these.

Michele Williams is an inmate at the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville.
Are relics ‘macabre’?; Divorce after years of verbal abuse?

Q I am a Catholic convert and support all the dogmas of the church. But there is one practice that I must admit gives me pause— the use of relics, preserving the body parts of deceased saints. I could see honoring robes or rings, but teeth or fingers seems a bit too much, bordering on the macabre. We never covered this in our RCIA program, and I’m hoping that you can explain. (New Middletown, Indiana)

A The veneration of the relics of saintly individuals has a long history, dating back to pre-Christian times. The bones of the Old Testament prophet Elisha once brought a dead man to life (2 Kings 13:20-21).

When St. Polycarp was martyred in the middle of the second century, a contemporary account stated, “We took up his bones, which are more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold, and laid them in a suitable place, where the Lord will permit us to gather ourselves together as we are able, in gladness and joy, and to celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom.”

In venerating relics, the church is not ascribing to them any magical powers, although they may sometimes serve as occasions of God’s miracles. More often, they simply dispose those who view them to strive to live the virtues of that particular saint.

Several years back, the estimable Father Paul Scalia observed of some cultural idiocy or other, “Who knew the end of civilization would be so amusing?” I detected a subtle theological point within that mordant comment: a point worth reflecting upon during Lent. Christians are the people who know how history is going to turn out—God is finally going to get what God intended from the beginning, which is the Wedding Feast of the Lamb in the New Jerusalem. (The trailer, so to speak, is in Revelation 21.) So Christians can afford to relax a bit about the vicissitudes and traumas of history. To be sure, faith that God’s purposes in creation and redemption will ultimately be vindicated ought not lead to insouciance about here and now; we have responsibilities within history and we should take them seriously. But faith in the triumph of the Kingdom for which we pray daily should invite us to “chill” (as the kids used to say).

That’s what I did during a recent skirmish in the American culture wars, which erupted a few weeks back over a leaked memo suggesting that President Trump would issue an executive order creating a preference that federal courthouses and other federal buildings be designed in a classical style. There isn’t much to laugh at along the Potomac these days. But the freak-out from the high priests and priestesses of the concrete-and-glass box— the modernist architectural establishment and its acolytes in the mainstream media— was (as I think the kids still say, at least in text messages) “LOL.”

The ever-more-ludicrous New York Times, in high editorial dudgeon, asked why the republic should be festooned with more “fake Roman temples”— as if the Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the West Building of the National Galler-}

I was married by a priest in the Catholic Church and have sought to live up to the church’s teachings. Would it be wrong in the eyes of the church to seek a divorce for the sake of my own health and that of my daughter? (City of origin withheld)

A The Catholic Church believes that marriage is meant to be a permanent union and that Jesus intended it to be so (Matthew 19:3-6). But it is also true that divorce may not always be sinful. In fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, “If civil divorce remains the only possible way of ensuring certain legal rights, the care of the children or the protection of inheritance, it can be tolerated and does not constitute a moral offense” (No. 2383).

So it could be that the ongoing emotional violence that you and your daughter have been forced to undergo might justify a separation and divorce. But the wounds from a divorce are wide, and you would want to take every prudent step before it comes to that.

Have you sought out a marriage counselor and encouraged your husband to do the same? My bias, I confess, is for counseling offered by church agencies, since they would share my views of the sanctity of marriage. And have you sought to bring God into the equation by frequent prayer? And please know that you have the promise of my own prayers as well.

The clerisy of the concrete-and-glass box freaks out

The Catholic Difference

George Weigel

George Weigel is the Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

The ever-more-ludicrous New York Times, in high editorial dudgeon, asked why the republic should be festooned with more “fake Roman temples” – as if the Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the West Building of the National Gal-
from March 15 to April 26, with the exception of Easter Sunday, April 12.

Registration each week will be from 1:30 to 1:55 p.m., followed by a group sharing session from 2 to 4 p.m. Questions may be directed to Michael Julian at (614) 282-7156 or mjulian@columbus.rr.com.

**Social concerns office offers Lenten suggestions**

The diocesan Office for Social Concerns is offering several suggestions for families interested in bringing a deeper meaning to their observance of Lent.

The 25th anniversary of Pope St. John Paul II’s encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* provides an opportunity to assess, expand, and communicate resources to pregnant mothers and families in need. Parishes, through the support of their bishop and pastor, are invited to join a nationwide effort from Wednesday, March 25 to the same date in March 2021 titled: “Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service.”

More resources continue to be added to the Walking with Moms website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, which may be found at https://www.walkingwithmoms.com. In addition, the USCCB’s March action guide provides helpful ideas to build a culture of life. It is at https://www.respectlife.org.

The diocesan offices for Social Concerns and Marriage and Family Life have teamed up to provide a Lenten journey for families, focusing on three ways to grow together – prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. More details may be found at https://columbuscatholic.org/family-ministry-enrichment or by calling (614) 241-2540.

Greater Columbus Right to Life is conducting its twice-yearly 40 Days for Life prayer vigil from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily through Sunday, April 5 in front of the Founder’s Women’s Health Center, 1243 E. Broad St., Columbus. Faithful believers are praying that this effort will mark the beginning of the end of abortion in the United States. Participants are asked to volunteer for one-hour shifts and sign a statement of peace.

For details and to sign up, visit Greater Columbus Right to Life’s website at www.gcrtl.org/40-days-for-life.html or call (614) 445-8508.

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and April is Autism Awareness Month. All persons with disabilities or with autism have gifts to contribute to the whole church. For resources available to individuals, families, and parishes to work toward the goal of full participation by those with disabilities or autism, visit www.columbuscatholic.org/persons-with-disabilities.

Again this year, the social concerns office will sponsor the annual Good Friday Walking Stations of the Cross in downtown Columbus. The walk begins with opening prayer at St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad St., at 8 a.m., Friday, April 10.

Hundreds of participants from across the diocese will walk to 14 downtown locations to recognize Jesus’ suffering and crucifixion and to reflect on current areas of social concern. Open to all ages. For more information, contact the social concerns office at (614) 241-2540 or the diocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at (614) 241-2565.

**Renewal retreat to focus on charisms of the Spirit**

“Charisms of the Holy Spirit” will be the subject of a retreat sponsored by the Columbus Catholic Renewal from 6 p.m. Friday, March 20 to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 21 at St. Therese’s Retreat Center, 5227 E. Broad St., Columbus.

Participants will journey through Scripture and church teachings to uncover and learn the Holy Spirit’s mission to bring fullness of life, pouring out spiritual gifts known as “charisms” to help people be holy and fulfill the mission of bringing Christ to others.

The retreat will be led by Renee Marazon, who is a member of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal National Service Committee and is president of the Charismatic Renewal Commission of the Diocese of Venice, Florida. She has given retreats, workshops and parish missions throughout the United States and Trinidad.

The Columbus Catholic Renewal is under the authority of Bishop Robert Brennan through his appointed liaison, Father Dean Mathewson. For more information, email info@ccrcolumbus.org or call (614) 980-3021.

Registration is $115 for overnight participants and $75 for commuters. The fee includes meals and a handbook titled Charisms of the Holy Spirit: Tools for the New Evangelization. Register online at www.ccrcolumbus.org.

**Program looks at journey from violence to healing**

A presentation featuring the families of murder victims talking about their experiences and the healing power of forgiveness will take place at 7 p.m. Monday, March 9 in Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School, 4212 Karl Road.

The program, titled “From Violence to Healing,” will be sponsored by Journey of Hope, an organization formed by murder victims’ families to address alternatives to the death penalty. It is designed to show Catholics how they can advance the Catholic Church’s teaching on the issue and become advocates against capital punishment. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has long opposed use of the death penalty in this country.

Journey of Hope speakers visited Columbus Bishop Hartley High School in October and presented programs in early March at DeSales and Columbus Bishop Watterson, Bishop Ready and St. Charles Preparatory high schools.

Diocesan schools Superintendent Adam Dufault heard the Hartley presentation and asked that the speakers visit the other schools.

“It was a deeply moving, thought-provoking experience that had a tremendous impact on our students,” he said. “They came to a much fuller and deeper understanding of our Catholic teaching opposing capital punishment and had profound discussions in their classes that led to a more complete understanding of our faith.”

**Pontifical College Josephinum to host five-in-weekend**

The Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 N. High St., Columbus, will host a spring live-in weekend from 4 p.m. Thursday, March 26, to noon Saturday, March 28, for young men of high-school and college age, along with men who have earned undergraduate degrees and are discerning a vocation to the priesthood.

The weekend is designed for participants to discuss and experience various aspects of seminary life – including prayer and spirituality, academic classes, liturgies and communal life – and to speak with faculty members, seminarians and staff. Discussions on human, spiritual and pastoral dimensions of seminary formation will be part of the live-in experience. There is no cost for the weekend, but registration is required.

For more information, contact Father Michael Lumpe, Josephinum vice rector, at mlumpe@pcj.edu or Armin Crawford at acrawford@pcj.edu. Both also may be reached by calling the Josephinum at (614) 885-5585.
Bishop Robert Brennan dedicated the new faith and family center at Newark St. Francis de Sales Church on Wednesday, Feb. 5. The 6,503-square-foot building includes additional meeting rooms, offices, and an auxiliary worship and conference room with a warming kitchen.

The evening began with refreshments and tours of the building, followed by the dedication. Participants then moved to the church sanctuary for Eucharistic Adoration, led by the bishop, with the theme of faith and family. The program ended with parishioners praying over Bishop Brennan and asking for a strengthening of his ministry in the Diocese of Columbus.

The vision and funding for the center were provided by the Patricia R. and Herbert J. Murphy Foundation to honor more than six generations of Murphy families who, since the early days of the parish, have actively engaged in the life of the church and school. The foundation’s desire is to provide a place in which the St. Francis de Sales faith community can continue to thrive, bringing more people to a life-changing encounter with Christ.

St. Francis de Sales Church has carried out its mission of making disciples and disciple makers for 178 years and has a membership of more than 1,400 families.

Clergy, continued from Page 2

Of Cincinnati until Oct. 21, 1944, when the area where they are located was transferred to the Diocese of Columbus.

Other than the directory listings, the diocese has no other record of any service by Father Masserella within the diocese and, as indicated, no reports of abuse during his time in the diocese.

The spelling of his name was taken from the Glenmary website. The Cincinnati archdiocese lists it as Massarella.

Virus, continued from Page 2

(ordinary and extraordinary) are asked to take proper measures to practice good hygiene, including the washing of hands and the use of hand-sanitizing solutions or wipes. All staff and volunteers should take similar measures.

Bishop Robert Brennan expresses his appreciation to all those who have been taking these measures into account in parishes, schools and diocesan facilities throughout the influenza season. The diocese will continue to work with local health agencies and update protocols as necessary. Information and resource links will be posted on the diocesan website and in The Catholic Times.

“Most importantly, we pray,” Bishop Brennan said. “Recognizing that there are people suffering far more than we the effects of this virus directly and indirectly, we pray for them, for all charged with public health and all caregivers.”
Thousands of items were collected for the Heartbeats organization at the annual “Baby Shower for Jesus” sponsored by Zanesville St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Parishioners were asked to donate any type of item that could be used by a baby for Heartbeats, which offers emotional, physical and spiritual support to women who find themselves in the midst of an unexpected pregnancy. Items donated included 7,896 baby wipes; 4,693 diapers; 387 articles of clothing; 339 miscellaneous items; $607 in cash; and a gift card. Pictured are (left to right) Sherri Dalton of Heartbeats, Michael Morris of the parish, Tess Davis of Heartbeats, and Christopher Urbiel and Becky Howard of the parish.

Serrans hear about Sacred Heart enthronement

Chuck and Jo Ann Wilson of Sacred Heart Columbus spoke to the Downtown Columbus Serra Club about their lay apostolate’s mission to enthron the Sacred Heart of Jesus in homes, workplaces, schools and churches, recognizing him as king and savior. The club’s mission is to foster and support vocations to the priesthood and consecrated religious life through prayer, programs and activities. The Wilsons are shown with club members who have enthroned the Sacred Heart in their homes. Pictured are (from left): first row, club president Virginia Hardy, Mary Girard, Jeanne Swisher, Ruth Beckman and JoAnn Wilson; second row, Chester Hardy, John Swisher, Chuck Wilson and Carl Faehmel.

St. Dominic spiritual rosary

The women of Columbus St. Dominic Church opened their year with their annual spiritual rosary prayer service. Each year, the rosary is prayed in thanksgiving for the previous year, with blessings and praise for the coming year. A potluck lunch followed the service, which is an outgrowth of the parish’s Sunday rosary group.

Bishop Brennan visits Bremen

Bishop Robert Brennan visited Bremen St. Mary Church on Sunday, Feb. 2, Candlemas Day, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. The bishop blessed candles, celebrated Mass and attended a reception in the parish hall.

Serrans hear about Sacred Heart enthronement

The women of Columbus St. Dominic Church opened their year with their annual spiritual rosary prayer service. Each year, the rosary is prayed in thanksgiving for the previous year, with blessings and praise for the coming year. A potluck lunch followed the service, which is an outgrowth of the parish’s Sunday rosary group.

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Shower benefits Heartbeats

Thousands of items were collected for the Heartbeats organization at the annual “Baby Shower for Jesus” sponsored by Zanesville St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Parishioners were asked to donate any type of item that could be used by a baby for Heartbeats, which offers emotional, physical and spiritual support to women who find themselves in the midst of an unexpected pregnancy. Items donated included 7,896 baby wipes; 4,693 diapers; 387 articles of clothing; 339 miscellaneous items; $607 in cash; and a gift card. Pictured are (left to right) Sherri Dalton of Heartbeats, Michael Morris of the parish, Tess Davis of Heartbeats, and Christopher Urbiel and Becky Howard of the parish.

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attitude of a technician just wanting to put things in the best light,” Snow said. “In my Presbyterian background, we had communion only two or three times a year, with the bread and wine presented as symbols of Christ’s sacrifice, not as his actual body and blood.

“I kept wondering why Catholics had communion at every Mass, and in time, the light came on, and I understood the doctrine of the Eucharist and could say, ‘I get it. This is what Catholicism is all about,’” he said.

Snow’s involvement with the locally televised Mass continued until production of the program ended in 2006. Today, Masses from other parts of the nation can be seen twice on Sundays on WWHO-TV, Channel 53 in Columbus, and throughout the week on cable television.

Snow continued to work for the diocese in the Chancery until 2009. He now operates his own photography business and does photojournalism and portrait work in addition to his Times assignments.

He said that even after he came to an intellectual understanding of Catholic doctrine, it took him several years to join the Church. “I was still a respectful technician,” he said.

His involvement began deepening after former Times editor Dave Garick asked him in 2015 to be the photographer for the annual investiture weekend of the North Central region of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, which took place in Columbus that year.

Garick is a knight of the order, which is a Catholic organization dedicated for more than 900 years to supporting Christians in the Holy Land.

Snow accepted the assignment and has been the photographer for subsequent investitures in Chicago, Indianapolis, Milwaukee and Dearborn, Michigan. He will perform the same role this year in Cincinnati.

“During the investitures, I came to know Dr. Ken Weise, a knight of the order who is an RCIA team member at Resurrection,” Snow said. “During the last Mass of the 2019 investiture in Dearborn, we sat together. At communion time, I received a blessing from the bishop celebrating the Mass, since I was not Catholic. Afterward, Ken invited me to come to RCIA classes at Resurrection and discern if I would like to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church. I felt ready to look deeper into Catholicism, so I accepted his invitation.”

Weise will serve as godfather for Snow’s baptism and sponsor for his confirmation.

“I think attending the first few classes awakened the inner desire I’ve had for a long time to be a Catholic,” Snow said. “I didn’t realize there was so much meaning even in as simple a thing as the sign of the cross. Through Father (Denis) Kigozi’s homilies at Masses which precede RCIA classes, I’ve come to have a much deeper respect and knowledge of the Eucharist and recognize that it is truly the body and blood of Christ. Now when I attend Mass, I no longer consider myself a technician but definitely a participant.”

### Rediscovering faith

Britanie Powers, who teaches first and second grades at the Coshocton parochial school, said she had a Methodist background, but stopped attending church about 15 years ago after her parents divorced. “I didn’t feel like I belonged anywhere,” she said. “I had forgotten the importance of a faith life.

“I was hired to teach at Sacred Heart about three years ago, and the staff and parents acted as though they’d always known me. They gave me that sense of belonging I was missing. I felt like part of the parish family before I had much interest in becoming a Catholic. As a teacher, I attended weekly school Masses, and, slowly, I gained more and more interest in learning more about the Church,” she said.

“The more I participated in Masses, the more I felt the Holy Spirit at work in me. I could feel God’s presence in the Eucharist, and in time I knew I wanted and personally needed to take RCIA classes,” Powers said. “I’m very interested in history, so realizing that the Catholic Church has its origins with Jesus and learning of what it has done through 2,000 years had a big impact. Also, learning the importance of all the sacraments and recognizing their Scriptural basis is something I’d never realized.”

Powers won’t be the first Catholic in her family. She and her husband, Cole, have a daughter who is nearly 1 year old and recently was baptized Catholic. “She attends Mass with me every week,” Powers said. “Cole comes to Mass with us often and has been very supportive. I’m very grateful to have been led to becoming a teacher here, because following the
examples of my co-workers and experiencing the full gift of God’s love led me to RCIA. I’m looking forward to growing stronger and learning more once I enter the Church.”

**Becoming Catholic unexpected**

Joining Snow in attending RCIA classes at Resurrection is 17-year-old Seth Camick, who said his desire to become a Catholic was the unexpected result of his intention to get someone to leave the Church.

“I grew up as a Seventh-day Adventist and was told all sorts of terrible things about Catholics – that the pope was the Antichrist, that sort of thing,” he said. “When I was a sophomore in high school, I wanted to share my faith with a Catholic friend because I wanted him to be part of it. I thought I’d learn more about what Catholics believed so I could convince him he was wrong.

“I saw a video by Father Mike Schmitz (youth ministry director of the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota) on the question of whether Catholics worship saints. What he said made a lot of sense, so I thought, ‘Well, I can’t nail him on that topic. Here’s one on why priests are called Father. I’ll get him on that.’ Again, he made sense,” Camick said.

“So I began looking at the Catholic Answers website and books about the Catholic Church. The more I studied, the more I came to realize the soundness of the Catholic viewpoint and how wrong I was. This upset my family and the elders of my church, but when I questioned them about the differences between their beliefs and Catholic teaching, no one had a good response.

“I believe God is calling me to either join the Catholic Church or go against what he wants, and I want to do his will,” Camick said. “It’s been about a year since I told my parents and others of my decision, and I’ve been going to daily Mass and attending RCIA classes regularly since then.

“Some people who knew me stopped talking to me, but things have become much better in my family. My mom even gave me a rosary the pope was the Antichrist, that sort of thing,” he said. At first he thought of what he saw in the videos as inspiration for his novel, “yet as I learned more about the Church, I began to espouse its teachings. Through the Holy Spirit, the beautiful devotions and the sound doctrines that I had misconstrued were unveiled to me.”

He knew he had to go to Mass to understand Catholicism more, so he attended his first Mass at the Grove City parish in February 2019. It was a special event featuring Latin chant from the Gregorian Schola of the Diocese of Columbus. “When at last I witnessed heaven touching down to earth upon the altar, I possessed no doubt that this was the Church the Lord Jesus Christ himself started,” he said.

As he learns more about the Church through the RCIA process, he says he’s contemplating the possibility of becoming a priest. “Each time I watch as the faithful go to the priest to receive the Lord’s body and blood, I not only desire to be among them, but also to be like the man who himself has the luxury of such a divine service,” he said,

As in Camick’s case, Stradley had to deal with parental concerns about his decision, particularly because his mother, Krista, is a staff member at a Nazarene church. “I wasn’t surprised, but I’ll admit I had some reservations,” Krista said. “But anyone who knows me knows my kids are everything to me, and I will always do what I can to support them.”

She said that through conversations with many people, including her church’s pastor, plus research, “I have discovered that my worries (about Logan’s decision) were based on misinformation.” She began attending RCIA classes to support Logan and “have found that I, too, feel my heart being drawn toward the Catholic faith, and the same can be said for Lee,” her husband, Krista Stradley said.

“I am not sure what the future holds, but I do know that we are so proud of Logan and of how certain he is about what lies ahead for him,” she added.

**Finding the evidence**

Joining the church during the Easter Vigil at Reynoldsburg St. Pius X Church will be Andy Biller, a lawyer who came to central Ohio 15 years ago when his wife, Beth, a pathologist, moved to Columbus for a medical residency at Ohio State University.

Beth, who will be the already baptized Biller’s confirmation sponsor, is a Catholic, but her husband had no interest in religion for years. “As a kid, I was a Lutheran, but like so many people, I decided around my teen years that I didn’t need this religion stuff and wasn’t sure there was a God at all,” Andy Biller said. “If there was a God, I needed more proof than a beautiful sunset or a set of circumstances that could be coincidental. I needed the voice of God or a burning bush. As a lawyer, I needed

See RITE, Page 12
Delaware St. Mary Church Family Night

Delaware St. Mary Church hosted a Family Night program in the parish school, with families from the school and the Parish School of Religion program for public school students coming together for food, fun, games and a talk by Anna Mitchell of the “Son Rise Morning Show,” heard on St. Gabriel Catholic Radio in central Ohio and the EWTN radio network.

Photo courtesy St. Mary Church

St. Pius X Beta Club wins multiple awards

Seventh- and eighth-grade members of the Reynoldsburg St. Pius X School Junior Beta Club received 18 first-place, six second-place and four third-place awards at the state convention of junior Beta clubs. All St. Pius X participants placed as a top finisher in at least one event. The national Beta Club is the largest independent nonprofit educational youth organization in America, with more than 500,000 members in more than 8,750 clubs.

Photo courtesy St. Pius X School

RITE, continued from Page 11

solid evidence.
“A couple of years ago, I got the evidence I needed,” Biller said. He declined to give specifics of what persuaded him of God’s existence. “I haven’t even told my wife,” he said. “It almost doesn’t matter, because it wouldn’t be compelling for anyone but me. But it was enough that when presented with the evidence, I knew I had only one choice.”

He began to examine Catholic beliefs, using the Catechism of the Catholic Church as a guide. “When I started, I thought this whole concept of God was something based merely on blind faith,” he said. “I found that’s not true at all. Having gone through so much of my life as a nonbeliever, I feel so foolish seeing what I see now. I have a lifetime to make up for.”

“The great strength of the Catholic Church to me is its internal consistency,” he said, “It presents an instructional manual for life. In so many ways, people in today’s culture are dissatisfied, yet what the Church teaches is what makes people happy. This faith has so much to offer, so much history. It just makes sense.”

Performing the rite

The Rite of Election takes place each year on the First Sunday of Lent. Catechumens indicate their desire to join the Church by signing the Book of the Elect, giving them the title “members of the elect.” Candidates participate in the Call to Continuing Conversion that is part of the ceremony.

The word “election” in this case has nothing to do with politics; rather, it is a discernment that God is present in the life of the catechumens and candidates and is inviting them into a fuller life of the sacraments.

The celebration of the rite has two parts: a sending and a receiving. First, catechumens are sent by the parish. This is a public pronouncement that they are ready to enter a covenant relationship through participation in the sacramental life of the Church. In the United States, this pronouncement is done through their presentation to a bishop in a ceremony conducted at one or more parishes in a diocese. This is the first of many sendings they will receive in their faith journey.

Those who are sent can then be received. The bishop or auxiliary bishop of a diocese attends the Rite of Election, accepts the parish community’s judgment, receives the catechumens and invites them to enter their names in the Book of the Elect. The announcement of the church’s decision to call candidates to receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil also falls to him.

Ken Snow of the New Albany Church of the Resurrection (left) and Dr. Ken Weise, who will be his baptismal godfather and Confirmation sponsor when Snow joins the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil service on Saturday, April 11.

CT photo by Tim Puet

Worthington St. Michael School fourth graders have been enjoying mystery novels and putting critical thinking skills and sleuthing abilities to the test. Discussing suspects’ statements and test results, students were able to solve the mystery.

Photo courtesy St. Michael School
Students of Coshocton Sacred Heart School gathered for a group picture by forming a cross, the symbol of their Catholic identity.

Four Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School seniors signed letters of intent to continue their football careers in college. They are (from left): Thomas Berry, who will be going to Denison University; Adyn Snyder, Otterbein; Roland Rowe, Notre Dame College; and Connor Carretta, Bucknell. Also pictured is the school’s head football coach, Deke Hocker.

Young people of Columbus St. Dominic Church portray African and African American saints such as Sts. Perpetua, Felicity and Augustine at the parish’s annual Black History Month celebration. The event, which focused on Black Catholic education, included a Mass celebrated by Bishop Robert Brennan, a luncheon, and student reflections on their Catholic education. Parishioner Bernadine Neal received the Deacon Robert Neely Award for outstanding faith and service.

Fourth-graders at Columbus St. Andrew School learned about pre-Lenten traditions, creating Mardi Gras floats from household items and displaying their creations in a parade through the school grounds. Pictured are (from left) Isabelle Poulose, Olivia LaSusa and Kyndra Raidiger.

Columbus St. Mary Magdalene School hosted an annual interschool spelling bee involving students of the host school and Columbus St. Cecilia, Trinity Elementary and St. Mary and Grove City Our Lady of Perpetual Help schools. The schools rotate as host each year. This year’s winner was Stephanie Yadaicela, an eighth-grader from St. Mary Magdalene. Finalists for the event were (from left): first row, Avery Pierre, Louis Homys, Kieran Kelley (runner-up) and Gracie Gersbach; second row, Conlan Dent, Angeliz Rivera-Martinez, Stephanie Yadaicela, Stevie Sheets and Kyra Tibbs. Finalist Christopher Cade is not pictured.

Lancaster St. Mary School’s seventh- and eighth-grade girls basketball teams won the Mid-State League tournaments for their respective grades. Members of both teams are pictured, with the seventh-graders in white and the eighth-graders in green. They are (from left): first row, Maria Pillar, Ava Albert; second row, Abby Krooner, Mallory Stanton, Lauren Kersell, Bree Jones; third row, seventh-grade coach Jack Gillum, Vanessa Funk, Nora Saffell, Charli Gillum, Ellie Bruce, Kyndra Nagle, Voni Bethel, Sydney Ellis, Kaitlyn Watson, eighth-grade coach Troy Saffell.

St. Charles football players sign letters of intent to continue their football careers in college. They are (from left): Thomas Berry, who will be going to Denison University; Adyn Snyder, Otterbein; Roland Rowe, Notre Dame College; and Connor Carretta, Bucknell. Also pictured is the school’s head football coach, Deke Hocker.
Second Sunday of Lent, Year A

Lord, have mercy on us as we put our trust in you

Glory is our destiny.

God takes us where we are, but He does not leave us there. He wants to share with us His intentions for us, and He wants us to accept His gift of glory freely. We must be willing to pay the price and cooperate with Him in the unfolding of His plans.

First, we must see it. Since it is God’s vision for us, it has to be understood somehow in human terms. We must allow God to stretch our minds beyond their usual earthly limitations.

To do this, there needs to be an emptying out of our own plans and machinations. We may think we know where we are headed and where we want to go, but we really don’t. It is more than we can hope for without God’s revelation to us.

God says to each of us, “Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father’s house to a land that I will show you.” Abram shows us that one small act done in faith, with trust in God’s vision for us, can become the hope of nations.

St. Paul reminds Timothy, “He saved us and called us to a holy life, not according to our works but according to His own design and the grace bestowed on us in Christ Jesus before time began, but now made manifest through the appearance of our Savior Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”

Next, we must enter into it, as Jesus did, through intense personal prayer that opens us to our own history and the history of the world around us.

Who has prepared the way for you? Who are your personal Moses and Elijah? For Jesus and for His companions on the mountain, they are the reminder that Jesus is the fulfillment of all that is written in the law and the prophets.

Finally, we have to see that it means moving on from where we are. In spite of Peter’s offer, there are no tents to set up a camp. After the experience of prayer, there is required a return to the world as it is, going down the mountain to get on with the journey. The journey is the paschal mystery — through suffering, to death, but ultimately to resurrection and glory.

Will we go as we are directed? God’s Spirit is active in us, transforming us from glory into glory. We are called to set our sights on Jesus in His glory, with the awareness that we too are being transformed. The Transfiguration calls us to change and renewal in our whole humanity, body, mind and spirit.

Through the power of the Spirit, it is the reverse of the Incarnation; we are moved by grace along the path to life in God. The Eastern Church reminds us that “divinization” is at work in us. In Jesus, we see God’s grace at work transforming our human nature, freeing us to share glory.

The cross is ahead of us. We don’t understand God’s ways. But we believe in God and trust in Him. The power of His Spirit will see us through. We taste glory and it gives us strength for the journey. The Transfiguration reveals God’s presence, God’s constancy and God’s strength to assist us in trials.

There is a hint of glory available to us. We see it in our own personal prayer, when we are truly intimate with the Lord. We notice it in others where we see grace at work in the face of hardship.

May we open our eyes to see the glimpse of glory right in front of us. May we be strengthened for the journey that will lead to the fulfillment of God’s plans for us and for the whole world. “Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in You.”

The Weekday Bible Readings

**MONDAY**
- Daniel 9:4b-10
- Psalm 79:8-9,11-13
- Luke 6:36-38

**TUESDAY**
- Isaiah 1:10,16-20
- Psalm 50:8-9,16bc-17,21,23
- Matthew 23:1-12

**WEDNESDAY**
- Jeremiah 18:18-20
- Psalm 31:5-6,14-16
- Matthew 20:17-28

**THURSDAY**
- Jeremiah 11:5-10
- Psalm 1:1-4,6
- Luke 16:19-31

**FRIDAY**
- Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a
- Psalm 105:16-21
- Matthew 21:33-43,45-46

**SATURDAY**
- Micah 7:1-4,15-18,20
- Psalm 103:1-4,9-12

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION MASS SCHEDULE: WEEK OF MARCH 8, 2020

**SUNDAY MASS**
- 10:30 a.m. Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.
- 3:30 p.m. Mass from Portsmouth St. Mary Church on St. Gabriel Radio (FM 88.3), Portsmouth.
- Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 7:30 a.m. on WHIZ-TV Channel 38, Zanesville. Mass from St. Francis de Sales Seminary, Milwaukee, at 10 a.m. on WHIO-TV. Check local cable system for channel listing.
- Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Spectrum Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or WOW Channel 378). (Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight).
- Mass from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee at 6:30 a.m. on ION TV (AT&T U-verse Channel 195, Dish Network Channel 261, or DirecTV Channel 305).
- Mass from Massillon St. Mary Church at 10:30 a.m. on WLKB radio (AM 1360, FM 94.5 and 89.5), Canton, heard in Tuscarawas, Holmes, and Coshocton counties.

**DAILY MASS**
- 8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight). See EWTN above, and on H-Lite (Channel 113, Ada, Logan, Millsburg, Murray City).
Preparations begin for Black Catholic Congress

By Pamela Harris
Director, Catholic Ethnic Ministries

This year marks the midpoint between the 12th National Black Catholic Congress, which gathered in Orlando, Florida, in 2017, and the 13th Congress, which will take place in 2022 at a time and place to be determined.

The theme of the Congress, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me: Act justly, love goodness, and walk humbly with your God,” means we are led by Christ as we accompany one another on our spiritual journey. It was and continues to be the intention of delegates to the event that each diocese, parish and community use the plan it adopted as a guide for the five years between congresses.

The African American ministry board of the Columbus diocesan Catholic Ethnic Ministries office will host three days of reflection this year. The dates and times are: Saturday, March 28, Gahanna St. Matthew Church, 807 Havens Corners Road; Saturday, Aug. 1, Columbus St. Dominic Church, 453 N. 20th St.; Saturday, Nov. 7, location to be determined.

Participants will review the Congress’ pastoral plan, discuss how the faithful of the diocese have implemented the plan’s pastoral strategies and initiatives, and examine ways of continuing to work together. The Ethnic Ministries office will report findings from the three sessions to the Congress, including feedback from the diocese’s delegates to the 12th Congress.

In addition, the diocesan delegation for the 13th Congress will be discerned during the days of reflection.

All Catholics in the diocese are encouraged to attend one of the days of reflection. Father Augustus Tolton, who attended the first Black Catholic Congress in 1889 and is one of six American candidates of African descent on the road to sainthood, said, “God is all over us all and he has many blessings for people of every race.”

St. Katharine Drexel was committed to the evangelization of African American and Native American Catholics. She used her personal funds to establish schools and parishes where communities of African Americans were formed to actively participate in the faith and receive the sacraments. Her ministry empowered people to build bridges, strengthen relationships and advocate for the needs of African Americans and Native Americans.

The Ethnic Ministries office welcomes collaboration with diocesan ministries, parishes and schools in fulfilling the mission of sharing the Good News. As St. Paul reminds us, the unity of the faithful is an expression of the catholicity of the Church: “I urge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

The national Black and Indian Missions office was founded by the Catholic bishops of the United States “to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and respond to real and pressing needs on the ground.” Its mission is one of evangelization and collaboration. The Diocese of Columbus has received a grant from the missions office to subsidize the cost of initiatives of the diocesan Ethnic Ministries office, in part through proceeds from the Black and Indian Missions collection on the first weekend in March. If you would like additional information about the missions, please visit their website, www.blackandindianmission.org.

You can stay connected with the Ethnic Ministries office by signing up to receive electronic communications. Text CEM to 22828 or email ethnicministris@columbuscatholic.org. Visit the office’s website at www.columbuscatholic.org/em for upcoming events and programs.

Retrouvaille provides lifeline for troubled marriages

By Michael and Margaret Shipka

Our marriage began with such high hopes and dreams. We were in love and felt like we could overcome any struggles together, with God’s help. A company bankruptcy three years into our marriage led us to relocate from Illinois to Ohio. While we had our struggles adapting to a new state, making new friends and building our life together in an unfamiliar environment, we still found time to connect.

When the economic collapse of 2008 claimed one of our jobs, our marriage also began to suffer. We became depressed and hopeless, and struggled with anger against our circumstances. At about this same time, we also found out we were unable to have children. Our life together was beginning to fall apart and we began to drift away from one another.

Two years later, we were both employed again, but our jobs required such different working hours we were hardly able to spend time together. We did, it was brief and often full of heated arguments. All of this misery culminated in one spouse feeling lonely enough to find comfort in the arms of another.

Before the affair, we had been in marriage counseling for nearly a year. When the counselor initially told us about Retrouvaille, we didn’t think our marriage was that far gone. Retrouvaille (French for reawakening) is for couples in deeply troubled marriages, often on the verge of divorce. It is designed to help them work through disillusionment, learn to communicate more clearly, heal their hurt and pain, and rediscover the love they had for each other.

During the week when the adulterous spouse confessed infidelity, the counselor again recommended attending Retrouvaille. This time, we were ready. We took stock of all we’d been through and how it impacted us. We recognized that our marriage was full of misery and distrust, and we were desperate to hear that it was possible to heal and rebuild. We needed a lifeline.

Through Retrouvaille, we discovered not only that we were not alone in our misery, but also that we could choose to love, trust, forgive and hope again. The tools we learned during our weekend and follow-up sessions have enabled us to connect more deeply and consistently. We have no more fantasies that our marriage will fit the perfect expectations of the world. Rather, we rediscovered who we are individually and as a couple. We drew closer to each other and to God.

The Retrouvaille program is offered in the Columbus area on three weekends every year, with follow-up sessions, and a chance to continue benefiting through monthly gatherings with other couples who have gone through the program. One of those weekends is coming up from Friday, April 24 to Sunday, April 26. If you can’t make plans for this event on such short notice, consider registering for the Oct. 16 to 18 weekend.

For more information, go to www.helpourmarriage.org or call (1-800) 470-2230 to receive information about Retrouvaille of Columbus.

If your marriage is miserable, attend a Retrouvaille weekend. Let us tell you our story and show you how a reawakening is possible.

Michael and Margaret Shipka are the registration and finance couple for Retrouvaille of Columbus.

CCL announces all-league teams for girls basketball

Columbus Bishop Watterson placed three players on the 2019-20 All-Central Catholic League first team after winning the regular-season championship in girls basketball.

Kilyn McGuff, Paige Woodford and Danielle Grim of Watterson were joined on the first team by Kami Kortokrax and Milayna Williams of Columbus Bishop Hartley, Erin Burns of Columbus St. Francis DeSales and Bre Hejduk of Columbus Bishop Ready.

Named to the second team were Grace Cantwell and Kiley Graham of Watterson, Sa’Ha’a Clark-Lee and Ella Brandewie of Hartley, Katie Schuler and Gracie Sabo of DeSales, and Dani Brown of Ready.

Watterson finished undefeated in the CCL and advanced to the Division I district final.

Hartley took second in the league and advanced to the Division I district semifinals.

DeSales wound up third in the league standings.

Watterson’s junior varsity team posted the best overall JV record.
PRAY FOR OUR DEAD

BETLEY, Army Col. (Ret.) Walter P., 98, Feb. 21
St. Agatha Church, Columbus

CUSACK, Josephine (Bolognone), 97, Feb. 22
Holy Family Church, Columbus

DENSMORE, Harriett (Weiner), 94, Feb. 20
Church of the Assumption, Crooksville

DULEY, Rose “Ann” (Hines), 78, Feb. 23
St. Bernadette Church, Lancaster

GALLAGHER, Regina F (Murphy), 89, Feb. 24
St. Bernadette Church, Lancaster

GILLILAN, James E., 85, Feb. 25
Holy Spirit Church, Columbus

GRASSI, Robert J., 86, Feb. 20
St. Paul Church, Westerville

HARLOR, Rachel (Miller), Feb. 9
Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel, Columbus

HARTMAN, Grace K. (Goodburn), 86, Feb. 22
St. Agatha Church, Columbus

HILLIARD, Thomas M. “Mike,” 71, Feb. 29
St. Bridgid of Kildare Church, Dublin

MICHELS, Jill M. (Watson), 46, Feb. 20
St. Brigid of Kildare Church, Dublin

MOLLICA, Loreta (Beniusial), 65, Feb. 23
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

MURPHY, James W. 73, Feb. 27
St. Mary Church, Lancaster

NEWELL, Paul J., 82, Feb. 28
St. Bridgid of Kildare Church, Dublin

PACE, Margaret (D’Alesio), 105, Feb. 28
St. Joseph Church, Dover

PERLICK, Robert J., 88, Feb. 18
St. Ladislas Church, Newark

PISHITELLI, Joseph, 92, Feb. 23
St. John the Baptish Church, Columbus

RICHARDS, Joseph E., 85, Feb. 26
St. Mary Church, Lancaster

RILEY, David M., 75, Feb. 25
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

SANFILLIPO, Elizabeth (Langley), 86, Feb. 27
St. Mary Church, Groveport

SCHMALZ, Rita, 95, Feb. 23
Our Lady of Victory Church, Columbus

SEKINGER, Theodore, 81, Feb. 27
St. Leo Church, Columbus

TORTORA, Walter G., 97, Feb. 26
St. Michael Church, Worthington

WHITTEMORE, Virginia H., 97, Feb. 25
St. Mary Church, Groveport

WILSON, George W., 76, Feb. 16
Church of the Assumption, Crooksville

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William D. Diehl

Funeral Mass for William D. Diehl, 87, who died Thursday, Feb. 27, was celebrated Wednesday, March 4. Burial was at St. Joseph Cemetery, Columbus.

He was a graduate of Columbus Holy Rosary High School, Ohio State University and the Capital University law school and a veteran of the U.S. Army, and was a retired attorney for the law firm of Kagay, Albert, Diehl, Acklin & Groeber.

He was selected by the Catholic Men’s Luncheon Club as diocesan Catholic Man of the Year for 1982. He was a member of St. Catherine Church for 59 years, volunteering with bingo and the RCIA program and serving as a lector, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist and altar server. He also was a member of Marian Council 3864 of the Knights of Columbus, the American Bar Association and the Columbus Maennerchor.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Harry and Virginia, and a son, William. Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Margaret “Peggy” (Devine); two sons, Tom (Monika) and Jerry (Janis); three daughters, Anny, Peggy (David) Hemmer and Mary (Jim) Deitz; a sister, Sister Mary Diehl, OSF; and 17 grandchildren.

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CLASSIFIED

St. Christopher Church
LENTEN PASTA DINNER
1420 Grandview Avenue / Trinity School Cafeteria
Fridays – February 28-April 3
5PM to 7PM
$8 for adults / $5 for kids / $30 per family
Meatless sauce provided by local area restaurants
March 6 – TAT Ristorante
March 13 – Z cucina di Spirito

OUR LADY OF VICTORY
CATHOLIC CHURCH
1599 Rambury Road, Marble Cliff
(Parish Life Center)
FISH FRY DINNERS
FRIDAYS, 2/28-4/3, 4:30-7PM
Fresh Ocean Perch (fried), Baked Potatoes, French Fries or Rice/Salad or Slaw, Beverages, Dessert included
$10 Adults, $5 Kids - Carryouts available

ST. PIUS X FISH FRY
1051 S. Waggoner Road, Reynoldsburg
(New parish center)
Fridays, 3/6, 3/20, 4/3, 5-7:30 pm
Baked or fried fish, shrimp, fries, choice pizza, apple sauce, hush puppies, coleslaw, beverage.
Optional dessert table.
$11 adults, $9 seniors, $6 children 8 and younger.
$35 maximum for families.
$11 carryout

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PRAY FOR THE VIRGIN
Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of heaven, blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in necessity. Oh, star of the sea, help me and show me herein, you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank and Forget all evil against me, and in all instances in my life, you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank...
HAPPENINGS

CLASSIFIED

ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA CHURCH
1600 N. Hogue Ave, Columbus 614-279-1890

22nd Annual “Best Fish Dinner in Town!”
Fridays during Lent
February 28-April 3, 4:30-7:30 pm
Fried Ocean Perch or Baked Cod, with choice of sides: French Fries, Baked Potato, Baked Sweet Potato, Macaroni & Cheese, Cole Slaw, Applesauce. Includes Roll & Butter, Homemade Desserts and Free coffee.
Adults - $11; Seniors - $10.50; Children age 10 & under - $5. Free under 3
Xtra Large Fish Platter - $16. Special family pricing.
Pep, Beer, Seconds & Carryouts available.

ST CATHARINE’S K OF C FISH FRY
500 S. Gould Rd, Columbus
FISH FRY DINNERS
Friday, February 28
& March 6, 20, 27
4:30-7:30 pm
Dine-in, Carryout & Drive-thru
Adults $12; Seniors (65+) $9
Children (under 12) $6; Under 5 Free
Fried Ocean Perch, Baked Cod, Fries, Mac&cheese, Coleslaw, Applesauce, Rolls, Dessert & Beverage.
Beer and wine available for purchase.

MARCH

5-6, THURSDAY-FRIDAY
33 Hours of Adoration at Resurrection
From end of 9 a.m. Thursday Mass to 6:30 a.m. Friday, Reservation chapel. Church of the Resurrection, 6300 E. Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany, 33 hours of Eucharistic Adoration in honor of Jesus’ 33 years on Earth. Also on March 12-13.

5-7, THURSDAY-SATURDAY
Three Bags Full Consignment Sale
10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday (selected items half-price Friday night and Saturday). Grove Community Christian Church, 3420 Blacklick Eastern Road N.W., Baltimore. Three Bags Full consignment sale of children’s items. Unsold and unclaimed items are donated to Catholic and pro-life charities. 614-561-5300

6, FRIDAY
St. Cecilia Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
St. Cecilia Church, 434 Norton Road, Columbus. Begins after 8:15 a.m. Mass; continues to 5 p.m. Saturday.
Eucharistic Adoration at Columbus St. Peter
9 a.m. to 8 p.m., St. Peter Church, 6899 Smoky Row Road, Columbus. First Friday Eucharistic Adoration in day chapel.
First Friday Masses at Holy Family
9 a.m., 12:15 and 7 p.m., Holy Family Church, 584 W. Broad St., Columbus. First Friday Masses in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. 614-221-4323
Monthly Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church, 5225 Refugee Road, Columbus. Begins after 9 a.m. Mass; continues through 6 p.m. Holy Hour. Catholic Men’s Luncheon Club
12:15 p.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Catholic Men’s Luncheon Club meeting. First of four talks on “Rebuilding a Christian Culture” with Father Stash Dailey, pastor of Columbus Holy Family Church and diocesan vicar for religious. $10 donation requested.
Eucharistic Vigil at Holy Cross
Holy Cross Church, 205 S. 5th St., Columbus. 7:30 p.m. Mass, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with various prayers, ending with Benediction around 11.
7, SATURDAY
Fatima Devotions at Columbus St. Patrick
7 a.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Mass, followed by devotions to Our Lady of Fatima, preceded by confessions at 6:30. 614-214-5910
First Saturday Devotion at St. Joan of Arc
8:30 a.m., St. Joan of Arc Church, 10700 Liberty Road, Powell. Mass, followed by rosary in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, concluding with Fatima prayers.
Mary’s Little Children Prayer Group
Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church, 5225 Refugee Road, Columbus. 8:30 a.m. confessions, 9 a.m. Mass, followed by Fatima prayers and Rosary (Shepherds of Christ format); 10 a.m. meeting. 614-861-4888
Life and Mercy Mass in Plain City
9 a.m. Mass, St. Joseph Church, 140 West Ave., Plain City. Saturday Life and Mercy Mass, followed by rosary and confession.
First Saturday Mass at Holy Family
9 a.m., Holy Family Church, 584 W. Broad St., Columbus. First Saturday Mass for world peace and in reparation for blasphemies against the Virgin Mary. 614-221-4323, extension 329
Maple Syrup Tour at Shepherd’s Corner
10 a.m. to noon, Shepherd’s Corner Ecology Center, 987 N. Waggoner Road, Blacklick. Tour and tasting showing how maple syrup is made. $6 per participant; registration required.
Sung Latin Mass at Columbus St. Patrick
11 a.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Sung Latin Mass in the Dominican rite for the Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, followed by reception. 614-224-9522
Bosco Bash at Bishop Hartley
2 to 8 p.m., Bishop Hartley High School, 1285 Zettler Road, Columbus. Monthly Eucharistic youth conference for ninth- to twelfth-graders, sponsored by diocesan Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry, with speaker Noelle Garcia, music, skits, service activities, prayer, small-group time, lunch, and Mass celebrated by Bishop Robert Brennan. Cost $30; adults $40. 614-241-2565
St. Christopher Adult Religious Education
10 to 11:20 a.m., Library, Trinity Catholic School, 1440 Grandview Ave., Columbus. Second of five studies of No Greater Love, a book and video series by Edward Sri filmed in the Holy Land and examining the last hours of Jesus’ life.
Frassati Society Meets at Assisi
10:30 a.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Frassati Society for young adults Mass, followed by Mass at Flatiron Tavern, 129 E. Nationwide Blvd. 614-224-9522
Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic Meeting
1:30 p.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Meeting of St. Catherine of Siena chapter, Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic.
Concert at Main de Paresse Center
4 p.m., Marín de Paresse Center, 2330 Airport Drive, Columbus. Concert with ensemble from the Columbus International Children’s Choir.
Prayer Group Meeting at Christ the King
5 to 7 p.m., Christ the King Church, 2777 E. Livingston Ave., Columbus. (enter at daily Mass entrance). Weekly parish prayer group meets for praise, worship, ministry, and teaching. 614-886-8266
Catholic Conversations Series
6 to 8 p.m., O’ie’s Tavern and Grill, 5447 Center St., Hilliard. Angel Fox, stage-4 esophageal cancer survivor, tells her story, titled “Meet a Miracle,” as part of monthly Catholic Conversations series for anyone 21 and older, sponsored by Columbus St. Margaret of Cortona Church. Contact Julie Naporano at julienaporano1@gmail.com.
Catechesis at the Cathedral
6:45 p.m., St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad St., Columbus. Father Adam Streitenger’s series of talks on the Catechism of the Catholic Church continues. Topic: “What Is Anointing of the Sick?” 614-224-1295
8-10, SUNDAY-TUESDAY
Parish Mission at Marion St. Mary
6:30 p.m., St. Mary Church, 251 N. Main St., Marion. Parish mission led by Father Joseph Tuscan, OFM Cap. Theme: “Repent and Believe.” Mass precedes Tuesday talk. 740-382-2118
9, MONDAY
Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary at St. Pius X
6 p.m., St. Pius X Church, 1051 S. Waggoner Road, Reynoldsburg. Recital of Chaplet of Divine Mercy, followed by Rosary for the sick of the parish and all who are ill. 614-886-2859
Bethesda Post-Abortion Healing Ministry
6:30 p.m., support group meeting, 2744 Dover Road, Columbus (Christ the King convent, first building west of church). 614-718-0227, 614-309-2651, 614-309-0157
Our Lady of Peace Men’s Bible Study
7 p.m., Our Lady of Peace Church, 20 E. Dominion Blvd., Columbus. Bible study of Sunday’s readings. Journey of Hope Program at DeSales Theology on Tap Meeting
7 p.m., St. Francis of Assisi, 836 Batelle Ave., Columbus. Monthly Holy Hour after 6 p.m. Mass. 614-299-5761
Encourage Ministry Monthly Meeting
6:30 p.m., Encourage, an approved diocesan ministry for families and friends of persons who experience same-sex attraction. Confidentially is maintained. Call for site. 614-296-7404
Abortion Recovery Network Group
7 p.m., Pregnancy Decision Health Center, 665 E. Dublin-Granville Road, Columbus. Abortion recovery network group meeting for anyone interested in recovering from abortion or who has been through a recovery program, and wants to stay connected. 614-721-2100
11, WEDNESDAY
Center for Dominican Studies Series
Noon to 12:30 p.m., St. Catharine of Sienna Room, Erskine Hall, 1216 Sunbury Road, Columbus. Lecture by Sister Mary Ann Fatula, OP, on “The Joy-Filled Truth of Lent.” Seventh talk in Center for Dominican Studies monthly series. Lunch provided; call for seating. 614-251-4722
Notre Dame Handbell Choir at Resurrection
7:30 p.m., Church of the Resurrection, 6300 E. Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany. Concert by University of Notre Dame handbell choir and musicians from the university and the parish.
12, THURSDAY
Maple Syrup Tour at Shepherd’s Corner
1 to 3 p.m., Shepherd’s Corner Ecology Center, 987 N. Waggoner Road, Blacklick. Tour and tasting showing how maple syrup is made. $6 per participant; registration required. 614-866-4302
Cenacle at Holy Name
6 p.m., Holy Name Church, 154 E. Patterson Ave., Columbus. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with prayers in the Cenacle format of the Marian Movement of Priests. 614-488-2428


March 8, 2020
Catholic Times 17
March 8, 2020

Catholic Times

18

With bright, sunny skies and temperatures in the 70s throughout our stay, we spent mornings strolling and shelling along the island’s 27-miles of soft, sandy beach and sparkling, blue waters. We were delighted that Lily taught herself to “body surf” in the Gulf’s gentle waves.

Most afternoons we drove to a variety of state and federal parks and forests, hiking along well-marked trails lined with palms and Spanish moss-draped live oak and cypress or rummaged through locally owned and managed craft shacks, art galleries and thrift shops. We dined at home on fresh fish and seafood purchased at small seafood markets and enjoyed a variety of laid-back restaurants and cafes that enthusiastically welcomed Lily either inside or on the outdoor patios.

According to John Solomon, executive director of the Apalachicola Bay Chamber, “Our ‘Forgotten Coast’ is one of the last places to experience ‘Old Florida.’ There are no big-box stores here and no malls. Legislation limits buildings to three stories. Our businesses are owned and managed by locals.

“In reality, we are no longer Florida’s ‘Forgotten Coast.’ Visitors come here from across America and abroad and stay for a few weeks or months. Many return and ultimately decide to move here. They appreciate our authentic friendliness and our laid-back lifestyle.”

Fishing, Boating and Tours

Visitors can fish off piers in the bay and on sandy beaches, and there are numerous boat rental outfits and dozens of skilled captains docked at marinas who conduct fishing charters and sightseeing cruises.

By Aaron Leventhal

I am an Ohio “snowbird,” determined to escape winter’s bleak and chilly days for bright, warm sunshine and sandy seashores. For the past three years, my wife Beth and I have vacationed along South Carolina’s Atlantic Seaboard. This year we were ready for a new adventure.

After checking out several destinations, we traveled in January to North Florida’s Panhandle along the Gulf of Mexico with Lily, our Labrador Retriever. The 50-mile stretch of coastline is promoted as “Florida’s Forgotten Coast,” a term adopted when, in the early 1990s, the state omitted the region on its maps.

The Forgotten Coast is anchored by the historic town of Apalachicola, a Native American word meaning “land of the friendly people,” and extends eastward to the barrier islands of St. George, Eastpoint, Carrabelle and Alligator Point.

A two-day drive of 850 miles south landed us on St George Island in a vacation rental with a view of the gulf (www.buckysbeachhaus.com).

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What to Do
Explore Apalachicola’s 1830s original town plan and three dozen historic sites on the self-guided Apalachicola Historic Walking Tour. St. George Island State Park offers nine miles of undeveloped beach consistently named among America’s “Top 10 Beaches,” majestic dunes and salt marshes. At Cape St. George Lighthouse, climb 92 wooden stairs for a spectacular view of the Gulf. Apalachicola National Forest offers hiking, birding, boating fishing, hunting and camping on 564,000 acres. The 18-hole course at St. James Bay Golf Resort is cited as an Audubon Signature Sanctuary and is open to the public with its excellent Crooked River Grill.

Set aside a day to travel to Wakulla Springs, home of one of the largest and deepest freshwater springs in the world. A 45-minute narrated river cruise meanders through the ancient cypress swamp (which provided the backdrop for the early Tarzan movies and The Creature from the Black Lagoon) offers views of its diverse inhabitants, including alligators, manatees and exotic birds. For lunch or dinner, the Edward Ball Dining Room in The Lodge provides an unforgettable experience with classic Southern fare in its 1937 Art Deco dining room.

Dining
The main attraction is, of course, locally caught fish and seafood. Grouper, snapper, trout, shrimp, oysters and crabs are prepared grilled, broiled, fried, steamed or blackened with sides of homemade coleslaw, hush puppies and black beans and rice. The region takes great pride in its reputation as “America’s Oyster Capital,” with local mollusks noted for a pure, mellow, briny bay flavor. Ninety percent of Florida’s crop and 10 percent of the nation’s output is harvested on 7,000 acres of oyster beds. Our favorite restaurants include the Apalachicola Sea Grill, touting the world’s largest fried fish sandwich; Harry A’s Sports Bar and Diner, with live music and karaoke daily; Blue Parrot Outside Café, with a large selection of po’ boys, tiki bar and waterfront deck; and Red Pirate Bar & Grill, with live music and mini-golf.

Shopping
Shopping is an adventure with dozens of small, eclectic shops, galleries and boutiques specializing in local handmade items, paintings, photography, sculpture, jewelry and nautical antiques and collectibles. Of note are the Grady Market, Tin Shed, Apalachicola Sponge Company and Pam Kelley’s Beach Trader on Highway 98 in Carrabelle.

Where to Stay
There are dozens of bed and breakfasts and small inns, as well as hundreds of vacation home rentals, RV resorts and parks. It’s best to avoid the crowds and prices of the high season of March through September. January and February are ideal for warm, bright days, tranquility and discounted prices.

For More Information:
Apalachicola Bay Chamber 850-653-9419
www.FloridasForgottenCoast.com

Columbus writer Aaron Leventhal has organized a 10-day, small group tour to Alaska in September 2020. Check it out at LeventhalTravel.com.
## Thank You!

**COLUMBUS CATHOLIC MEN’S AND WOMEN’S**

**2020 CONFERENCE SPONSORS**

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<td>Tim Nguyen - The Cottage Tailoring</td>
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<td>Zaino Hall &amp; Farrin, LLC - Attorneys at Law</td>
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<td>Crispin Iron and Metal</td>
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**You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.**

- 2 Corinthians 9: 11-12